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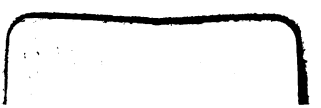

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"SEEING IS BELIEVING."

THE EYE-WITNESS,

AND

HIS EVIDENCE ABOUT MANY WONDERFUL THINGS.

BY

CHARLES ALLSTON COLLINS.

LONDON:
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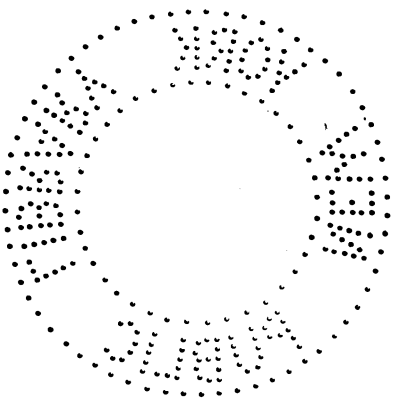

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LETTER OF DEDICATION

TO

CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSHEND.

My dear Friend—These papers owe their existence in some sort to you, inasmuch as it was at your suggestion and in your company that I went to see the first of the many wonders, exhibitions, failures, and successes which are here described. Who knows—if you had not stimulated my curiosity by a most inviting description of the Talking Fish, and its conversational and other social qualities—who knows whether I should have gone to see that afflicted animal, and who knows, if I had NOT gone to see it, whether the idea of the Eye-witness papers would ever have occurred to me? Apart then from the strong desire which I feel to convey to you some mark of my regard, there does seem, in the fact which I have just mentioned, a good reason why I should dedicate this volume to you.

It is the custom of many of our dramatic authors, and has been so time out of mind, when they wish to convey some piece of information to the public, to put into the mouth of some one of their characters a long statement which he makes to a bosom friend, with every word of which the friend in

question (but not the audience) is already obviously acquainted. Thus when Melville, in the play, comes to breakfast with Belville, he will often proceed to revive the memory of his friend in connexion with various circumstances relating to his (Melville's) early career which are perfectly well known to the other all the time. 'It is no secret to you,' Melville will commence, 'it is no secret to you, my dear Belville, that when, from a sudden diminution in his means attributable to no fault of his own, my lamented father was compelled to retire to a small property of my mother's in the South of France, to end his days in a poverty to which he was little accustomed—it is no secret to you, I say, that he was accompanied only by my mother and myself, and by one solitary retainer of our family, who insisted on following and sharing my father's broken fortunes.' Or sometimes it will happen that the communication is in a vein of light and airy pleasantry, and then our friend will open the dialogue in a wholly different style, and will discourse something after this fashion:—'Do you remember the night, Belville, when we were quartered in Seville during the Peninsular war? Do you remember our scaling the wall of Don Portugale's garden, and our interview with the Donna, his lovely daughter, and her pretty maid? The moon was shining overhead, the fire-flies were shooting about like meteors, the atmosphere was faint with the smell of the orange-blossom,' &c. &c. &c.

Now in both these cases, and many more might be added, the statement is conveyed from Melville to Belville, not for the enlightenment of the last-named personage, but simply to put the public up to some circumstance or train of circumstances of which it was necessary that it should be made aware. To you then, my dear friend, let me also in the manner of Melville's communications to Belville, announce

three facts with which you are already perfectly acquainted:—namely, that these papers first came before the public in the pages of 'All the Year Round,'—that it is by the permission of Mr. Charles Dickens, the conductor of that periodical, that they are now republished in a collected form,—and that, *in* that collected form, this is their first appearance.

And now having said this much about my work—and the less said in such cases it always seems to me the better—let me bring this dedicatory letter to an immediate close. I cannot do so, however, without repeating once more my assurance of the pleasure it gives me to place at the commencement of this little volume the name of one of the most valued friends whom it is my fortune to possess, one whose own labours in the higher field of poetry have not rendered him indifferent to the claims of humble prose, and one who has especially ever shown an interest of no ordinary kind in all that comes from the pen of

His sincere Friend,

THE AUTHOR.

Calais, 6th August, 1860.

PAGE

XII.—His Evidence as to the conversation and performances of a great and goodly Seal, which went by the name of the Talking Fish 154

XIII.—His Evidence concerning the skill and docility of a little learned Bull 160

XIV.—His Evidence as to the fatness and stupidity of some other Bulls, which were neither little nor learned . . . 167

XV.—His Evidence as it affects a goodly Society of Princes and Nobles, into which he was admitted on the payment of a Shilling Fee 176

XVI.—His Evidence in the matter of the Misanthropic Society, its terrible doings, its occult practices, and the grasp obtained by it on some of our Places of Diversion . . 190

XVII.—His Evidence regarding the Tasting of Wines, the Holding of Wine-glasses, the Tapping of Casks, the Inserting of Spigots, and the hatefulness of Intemperance; the whole of these matters being eliminated by and through the medium of a visit to the London Docks. . . . 203

XVIII.—His Evidence as to the sprightly Genius and the daring Originality exhibited in our London Statues . . . 224

XIX.—His Evidence as to the sprightly Genius and the daring Originality exhibited in our London Buildings . . 243

XX.—His Evidence upon the same subject, continued . . . 259

XXI.—His Evidence concerning the wisdom and ability displayed by those Persons whose function it is to select the Pictures for our National Gallery 277

XXII.—His Evidence upon the same subject, continued . . 300

XXIII.—His Evidence as to a very strange and unknown Institution, called a 'Friendly Lead,' with marvellous revelations as to the nature of the same 321

XXIV.—His Evidence as to the Posthumous Uses to which the Body of a Great Artist may sometimes be put: with which final notice this Series of Reports is brought to a termination . 338

THE EYE-WITNESS.

It was once the fortune of the writer of the following pages to sit (for a few minutes) under an eminent divine of a dissenting persuasion, who in describing the different means of access to the mind by which convictions and impressions from outside may reach it, availed himself of a quotation from John Bunyan to the following purpose:—'There are,' said the preacher, 'five gates or avenues of access to the human mind: "Nose-gate"'—which, by-the-by, was the gate through which this gentleman conveyed his lesson to the congregation—"'Nose-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate, Ear-gate, and Feel-gate."'

Now it is in no disparagement of the other gates enumerated in the above list that the name given to these papers (which seems to point more especially at the Eye-gate than at any of the rest) has been chosen, but simply because more of the impressions which are here set down reached the brain of the writer through the medium of his eyes than by means of his other senses. It is the intention of the Compiler of these reports to say, in the course of them, as little as possible about himself. The peculiarity of the title, however, to which he lays claim, and which heads this volume, may seem to excuse some word or two of explanation as to how he came to adopt it, and as to the nature of the work to which it is prefixed.

It has already been stated, in the Dedicatory Letter which has just claimed the reader's attention, that it was at the instigation of a friend that the author paid a visit to a cer-

tain wonderful exhibition, first opened some year and a half ago, in which a seal of average intelligence was made to pass for a fish endowed with the power of holding dialogues with man, and furnished with other marvellous and surprising qualities which need not now be enumerated.* Now it was while standing by the side of the leaden bath in which this animal was shown that it suddenly occurred to the writer that it might be possible for him to describe what he saw before him in such terms as should convey to others some sense of the mixed absurdity and pathos which the scene itself brought to the mind of him who beheld it. Might he do this? and if in any measure successful, might he not seek out other exhibitions and visit other scenes which might also suggest in their turn words that might amuse an idle hour or beguile—it is a high ambition—a sad one?

This was all. In furtherance of this idea the author journeyed far and near, sometimes among well-known scenes and sometimes among such as the world forgets or is ignorant of. As the number of his reports augmented, and as his idea became more known, suggestions from without would reach him, and revelations would come to him of unsuspected wonders going on in the very town in which he lived, and—speaking figuratively—within a stone's throw of his very door. Of such suggestions the EYE-WITNESS—self-endowed with the title as indicating his wish to serve the public in that humble capacity—was ever glad to avail himself, and to them he is indebted for some of the most interesting matter that came at all under his attention. Arguing with himself that if the scene at which he had been present had amused and interested him it must amuse and interest those to whom it was properly and truly presented on paper, the Eye-witness would sit down while the impressions were fresh upon him and reproduce, as completely as he could, all that he had seen and heard. The result of his

* An account of this Exhibition of the Talking Fish will be found about the middle of this volume, among other evidence upon somewhat similar subjects.

labours lies in the pages which follow, from the perusal of which it is unnecessary that he should now detain the reader longer than to say, that he trusts he has in the course of them given offence to no one but to such as richly deserve castigation, and that he knows at least that in no case has the sanctity of friendship been betrayed, in any one of his reports, or the sacredness of private life been invaded.

I.

HIS EVIDENCE UPON CERTAIN MUSICAL AND VOCAL MATTERS.

A SMITH'S anvil, rusty and broken.

An old jingling spinet, or harpsichord, brass bound, and with a pious Latin inscription on its lid—'Donum Dei.'

What of these things?

A summer evening—a country church. The door is left half open, and the fresh warm air invades the building, and stealing in, remonstrates gently with the somewhat earthy atmosphere of the place, and the close but not unpleasant odour of old pews, and leather binding of huge Bibles and Prayer-books. 'These smells are not so bad,' says the sweet pure air, 'but I am better—so let me in.'

Through the opened door, borne in upon the perfumed air, come sounds that breathe of peace. The sound of rustling leaves that quiver in the summer breeze and rattle pleasantly against each other, and some against the old church windows. The sound of distant cattle, of sparrows in the church roof, of the cuckoo far away, of rooks subsiding for the night in the elm-tree near at hand. Is this all? No—there is one sound more that seems to bind the rest together, and measure out the time to them—a sound it is, that though it tells of labour, gives yet an added measure of repose to the rest of him who listens to it—a sound clear as a bell, and true in time as the progress of the village clock. It comes from the blacksmith's hammer ringing on

the anvil, and every inch of air through which that sound must pass, adds its tribute of tune as the note goes by, and sends it into the church at last, in matchless ringing melody.

And how does it happen that the church door is open to admit it at such a time as this? There is no priest in the building—no service going on. Yes, there is a priest of heaven's choir in the place, and a service going on such as men are placed in the world to do. For the German gentleman who plays upon the organ has come there to practise, and is sitting in the church alone.

The German gentleman has come to practise, and yet the organ is silent, and no sweeping wail of harmony is heard to challenge those evening sounds with which the air is loaded. Why, how is this? The German gentleman is idle. Let us softly draw aside the curtain of the organ-loft and look.

The German gentleman is seated before the organ in an attitude of perfect rest. He stirs not, except that now and then by a mechanical action the fingers of one hand pass over certain of the keys, touching them lightly, but not pressing them down. His eyes are turned towards the light—it is to the light that men look when their work is right and honest, and when they would drink in more force for their labour. His eyes are turned to the sky, but he sees not what he looks at. His ears are at work and not his eyes—he is *listening* and not *looking*. Listening—and to what? Is it to the cawing of the rooks, or the song of the birds, or the rustling whisper of the leaves? He is listening to none of these. He hears them indeed, but only as we faintly hear the accompaniment to a lovely song. He is listening to that other sound—of the smith's hammer falling on the anvil, and as the notes drop singly on his ear he shapes them into a chord of melody that has lived for a hundred years and more, and gained with every added year of life an added ring of glory.

That smith was the Harmonious Blacksmith, and the German gentleman was—Handel!

From this passage of quiet pastoral life; from this episode of a country church, and a village organist, let us now turn to a widely different scene—The Handel Festival is in all its glory. The sun is blazing down on the glass roof of the Crystal Palace, glancing among the leaves of the shrubs, penetrating to the glittering scales of the golden fish in the water, extracting more and more wealth of overpowering perfume from the orange trees, and finally descending in a genial glow upon the head of him who writes these lines, or, in other words, upon the Eye-witness.

He has examined the smith's anvil spoken of at the beginning of this report, and which was appropriately brought to the Crystal Palace for the Handel Festival. He has (being accompanied by one high in office) heard the faint tinkling note of the harpsichord at which Handel composed, and he now proceeds to take the place assigned to him in the building, and prepares to listen to the music, which, beginning at the faint sound of that poor spinet, has now reached its full development in an orchestra, the force and number of whose instruments would almost extort an echo from the very sky itself.

From the seats that rise on an incline, opposite the orchestra, and at the furthest extremity of the transept from it, your Eye-witness looked over the vast space between him and the musicians, and was surprised to speechlessness, by the extraordinary scene before him. It was like being upon a hill and looking over a plain of flowers. Bonnets of every shade, but chiefly of white, with tender mixture of brighter colour in ribbons, or other adornment; all by the vast numbers and by the grouping of chance arranged in lovely agreement and concord of tint, and made perhaps to sparkle all the more by the black admixture of men's hats scattered about among them. Bonnets near, bonnets far off; back views of bonnets close at hand, their owners looking down in study of programmes or books of words, so that one saw disastrously near the backs of lovely necks that looked like cream, and heavy lumps of hair, so dexterously plaited,

so mercilessly entwined, so purely clean, so shaded with soft pent-house muslin, adorned with such culture and cleansing of each separate hair, that when the selection from 'Samson' came, one was almost ready to excuse the strong man for falling a victim to charms, which those can resist alone whose hearts are girt about with threefold brass of heroism, or else with the ice of a base insensibility.

Acres of bonnets—and underneath each one of them, the separate cares, desires, hopes, and fears that make up each one's own identity. Each one responsible; each one with power to add to the happiness or misery of many others. Bonnets upon foolish heads, upon vain heads, upon peevish heads, upon dissatisfied heads, upon envious heads, upon disappointed heads, upon petted heads, upon neglected heads. Bonnets upon wise heads, upon humble heads (not many these), upon cheerful heads, upon contented heads, upon the heads of ladies who write, ladies who are musical, ladies who act, ladies who paint, ladies (bless them) who can do none of these things, ladies who rule, ladies who submit, ladies who can conduct a household well, ladies who can do the same badly, ladies who come to hear the music, ladies who come to show themselves. Bonnets diminishing in the vast distance till the furthest off are not so large as the lily of the valley's smallest bud, upon those that are near at hand, and some that are further still and can hardly be seen at all.

Immediately about and around the position occupied by your Eye-witness were to be found specimens of almost all the different classes of visitors of which a musical audience is composed. Here were Germans in endless numbers, grave men these, with light hair and moustache, with long legs and short frock coats; men who brought books of the music with them and checked it off as it advanced. Here, too, were provincial clergymen, members of choral societies, who had large families of daughters plainly dressed and every one provided with the score to see that it was all done correctly and properly. Knowing people these to a fault, and spectacled *to excess;* good subjects though, who will never upset

dynasties or join in revolutions; people who get up Handel among themselves, and are very good and happy and uninteresting. Here, too, were the fashionable clergy, gentlemen with hair parted at the back, with well-made clothes, with lavender gloves; men who take pupils, and who become absent and excited when a bishop comes in with a lady on his arm, who is got up in the quietest (and most expensive) of costumes, who goes about to district meetings, and is very humble to the poor, and prouder in her heart than even her lordly husband, and he is not humble altogether either. Here, too, were the honest open-mouthed staring part of the public, who don't know a polka from a chant, but have come to stare, and because their next-door neighbours, who are here, would triumph over them if they stopped at home; and here also were some of the men who came down in the same train with your Eye-witness, and who brought their gloves wrapped up in paper and put them on in the carriage; and here—is Mr. Costa advancing to his place in the orchestra, looking no bigger in the distance than an ant creeping along the side of a mole-hill, and received, as well he may be, with a storm of approbation.

Coming early in the day, when all one's faculties were fresh and unjaded; coming upon a brain not fagged with a day's work, as it generally is when at operas or night concerts, the music will hardly bite upon the ear's palate at all; coming in the full splendour of its own magnificence, and set off by every vocal and instrumental aid that could heighten the glory of its loveliness, the Te Deum of the great German composer seemed to your Eye-witness the greatest work he had ever heard; and the time which it occupied, which was not inconsiderable, went by unnoticed, like the time we pass in sleep, or in such happy labour as will make the hours seem as minutes.

The scale, too, of everything about was so grand! The mighty orchestra, the rushing wind of the stringed instruments, the outcry of that army of brass, the pyramid of drums, at a distance so great that the eye saw them struck

the fraction of a moment before the sound reached the ear, the black chorus of the men, and most beautiful of all, and never to be forgotten, the distant women's choir—never to be forgotten in the perfection of its colour; a combination of the rich warm white of the dresses, of the various ribbons, primrose-colour, rose, marsh-mallow, and apple-green; and the great pervading line of a thousand women's faces. The rising of this choir to sing, and its sinking down again when during solo parts its services were not required, was in the gentle uniformity of the action, spread over so large a surface, infinitely gratifying to the eye, and inexpressibly touching and gracious. Indeed the eye found a resting-place in that part of the orchestra, from which it did not seek to wander, and was perfectly satisfied with what it saw, as the ear was with what it heard.

The eye requires to be thus comforted in the Crystal Palace, for surely the effect of the colours employed in the building itself is very far from satisfactory. That very cold blue and that dull earthy red go wretchedly together, and the experiment of trying them has answered so ill, and the effecting-of a change would be so possible and almost easy, that there seems no harm at all in calling attention to the desirableness of some alteration in this matter. The effect here complained of is especially apparent in the panels—which occupy a very large surface—on each side of the orchestra. Nothing could be imagined more cold and unpleasant, or, in a climate like this, more inappropriate. When listening to a concert at the Sydenham Palace all this is particularly remarkable: at other times when wandering among cool Pompeian courts, among flowering shrubs and by water reflecting the colour of the lovely plants that grow in it and not that of the building itself, the eye has nothing to complain of.

Is it that every entertainment is too long, or is it that there is a disadvantage in second parts? after the break that divided the first portion of the performance from the second, your Eye-witness enjoyed the music less. People do not come back after a rest of this kind in the enthusiastic state in

which they were before it. The musical clergy did indeed return manfully to the charge; but their rows of pale daughters sat less upright and turned over the leaves of the score with less vigour of rustle, while the German connoisseurs, who did not leave their places during the 'interval,' glared vengefully around, and looked as if they would be prepared to resent the omission of a single note of recitative. Now your Eye-witness would resignedly have put up with the withdrawal of a great deal. Nay, in the course of the selection from Samson, he collapsed altogether, and found himself looking with great animosity upon the Germans in his immediate neighbourhood, who during all the dull passages, when there was no hint of a tune, would look from one to another with expressions of admiration, and give many indications of seraphic happiness. It appeared to your Eye-witness, also, that these gentlemen set their faces in a very aggravating manner against all the more popular portions of the compositions to which they were listening, and that they actually wore a disparaging aspect upon their countenances when anything in the shape of an air was introduced. There was something so irritating about this that your Eye-witness felt at times a wish that the orchestra would suddenly punish these connoisseurs with a tune of Verdi's and so finish them on the spot. What is this disparagement of tune on the part of musical people? Is it not something like an undervaluing of story in art? Your Eye-witness is of opinion that all these amateurs were utterly disgusted when the Dead March from the oratorio of Saul, and the 'See the Conquering Hero comes,' from Judas Maccabeus, rang through the building, and made every uninitiated heart in the place to leap for joy.

The effect of both these compositions, but especially of the first, was infinitely striking. There is in the Dead March an element of discord imparted by the peculiar note of the drum, which is almost horrible in its harsh grandeur. The honest public—such members of it as were awake—the honest public, which was getting all abroad during many parts of 'Saul,' and which was 'nowhere' throughout the selection

from Samson, woke up to a hushed rupture at its favourite Dead March, and to almost more than rapture at the 'Sound the alarm' in Judas Maccabeus. And well it might. A more glorious song, or an air more gloriously delivered by the singer who undertook it, could hardly be found. And here the Eye-witness feels it to be a positive duty to call the attention of such among his readers as were not present at the Crystal Palace on the twenty-second of June, 1859, and to *re*-call the attention of those who were, to an instance of a want of fitting respect for the public, on the part of the favourite tenor singer just spoken of. Upon entering the orchestra, this gentleman was received, as his talents deserve by a great storm of applause. Instead of gratefully acknowledging this at once he turned his back to the public, and made very slowly a succession of profound bows to the performers in the orchestra. Several of these obeisances—perhaps seven or eight—having been executed with immense deliberation, and the public beginning to tire of the eminent tenor's back, the applause slackened, and then this gentleman apparently just discovering that there were one or two people present, turned round, and slightly saluting the audience, took his seat.

The effect of all this was inexpressibly impertinent; and an audience less lenient and less enduring of insult than an English one, would have resented such a want of consideration for the public who pays him, and on whom he depends, on the part of any performer however eminent. The English audience does more than endure insult, it absolutely encourages it, and may be treated with any degree of impertinence with great impunity. Your Eye-witness would like to *be* the Eye-witness of such behaviour as this to a French audience. It would not occur twice he thinks.

It is not generally known that these Handel Festivals are not altogether such new things as we imagine. In 1784 Handel's centenary was celebrated in Westminster Abbey by a jubilee that lasted four days, and at which five hundred performers assisted under the direction of the illustrious

Cramer. Indeed Handel appears to have been always highly appreciated in this country, from the time when the musicians who were playing his music used to watch the back of his periwig to see whether he was satisfied or displeased with their performance. This is admirably touched on in an old and quaint French life of the composer: 'Handel,' says the biographer, 'was in the habit of wearing an enormous white perruque, the vibratory movements of which used to announce to the musicians whether he was pleased or disgusted with their execution of his music.' From that time to this, Handel has never lost his position with the English, who from his residence in this country look upon him almost as a national institution, and seem half inclined to give to this nation the credit of his composition. Just heaven! how would that 'white perruque' have vibrated if Handel had lived to hear his music executed by an orchestra and chorus of three thousand performers! It was impossible not to think of this during the finer parts of the Te Deum and the Judas Maccabeus; and one friend of the Eye-witness who was present, and whose own professional achievements have quickened his imaginative faculties, declared that as he looked at Handel's portrait hanging in front of the orchestra, it almost seemed to him that the painted likeness started into life; and that the *hand was beating time.*

That white perruque! what thoughts would have passed through the head that it covered, had its owner been present at the festival of eighteen hundred and fifty-nine. Would that head have been raised in joy and elation, or would it have sunk forward overpowered and crushed down by emotion? Would the head have triumphed or the heart? Surely the last.

And this, thought the Eye-witness, as once again at the end of the day he stood where he had stood at the beginning, by the side of the old harpsichord—this is what it all came from. On these wretched wires were tried the sounds which since here they had their birth men have paid away money

by tens of thousands to hear. At this instrument, too impatient to wait till he could try it at the organ, the great composer must have heard the first sounds of his own Hallelujah, and of the hymn of adoration, which rung through this place to-day. At this instrument in his house in Brook Street he must have sat and played to many who thought that harpsichord a mighty musical achievement, and who admired the poor tinkling machine itself almost as much as they worshipped him who played upon it. And lastly at this ininstrument he must have sat when old and blind (as he was for many years), recalling ancient melodies and shaping new ones, and wishing for yet more years of life in which to put into form the many thoughts of harmony which he could hear with his soul's ear, and which descended upon it like sounds from Heaven.

II.

HIS EVIDENCE CONCERNING AN INFANT MAGNET; SHOWING THE DISCRETION AND SKILFULNESS OF HER PERFORMANCES.

It was the most inconvenient thing in the world to your Eye-witness to stay at the village of Smallport a single day beyond that on which he had originally determined to quit that watering-place. The E. W. was thoroughly sick of the place. He had used it up utterly. He had wrung it dry. The sight of canvas shoes and round straw hats had become a positive misery and nuisance to him; and he was even tired of paying twice the proper amount for every article which he found it necessary to consume.

Other reasons there were for going on that particular day. He had business in the metropolis. He would have travelling companions (the pleasantest possible), with whom he had arranged to make the journey; and finally on that day the term for which he had taken his lodgings, over the Post-office, expired.

What was it then that caused your Eye-witness to write

to London putting off the matter of business which demanded his presence there? What was it that induced him to excuse himself to the friends on whom he had depended for some mitigation of the wretchedness of a railway journey? What was it that determined him to take a room at the hotel for the night, his lodgings being already let to other occupants, and his only bed, so to speak, cut away from beneath him?

It was THE INFANT MAGNET!

Passing by the shut-up 'Rooms' which are to be found in most watering-places—and which are almost always, like these in question, shut up—your Eye-witness observed pasted upon the door-post a large printed bill, which at once caught and riveted his attention.

It was a good and promising placard surely. It told the public of Smallport that Miss Rebecca Salamans (better known as the Infant Magnet) would appear for that night only at the Assembly Rooms, and would, 'besides exhibiting other phenomena,' go through certain performances in Animal Magnetism, a list of which (including an act called 'The Rigid Legs') was appended beneath.

Who could resist such an entertainment as this? Certainly not your Eye-witness. Was it not his duty—was it not the very marrow and essence of his function—*as* an Eye-witness to be present at such exhibitions? What rich promise too in this hand-bill! Here was a careless way of talking about wonders—'besides exhibiting other phenomena!' Just Heaven! what a light way of speaking of phenomena. What things must people be in the habit of seeing and doing who could word their advertisement thus!

'The Rigid Legs' too! Was it for one moment to be supposed that the E. W. could go away from Smallport without seeing the Rigid Legs? Nor let any ill-disposed person (for without apology there are such in the world) hastily jump to the conclusion that the E. W. was, in his keen longing to witness the act thus designated, influenced by any base or unworthy motive. If any there be who for one instant suppose that the legs here spoken of were the legs of

Miss Rebecca Salamans, let them know that such a supposition is equally discreditable to that reputation for strict propriety which all who are acquainted with the Infant Magnet know her to be endowed with, and to that of the writer of these words, who would instantly have turned his back upon any town or village where the legs of a young lady, whether rigid or otherwise, should be thus prominantly brought forward and thrust (if we may use the expression) on the attention of the public. No—the legs here spoken of were the legs of Master Raphael; and Master Raphael was the Magnet's brother. All here is propriety and equal rigidity of principle and of leg.

And as it appeared (on further perusal of the advertisement) of body too. This Magnetic Infant, besides being able so to affect the lower limbs of Master Raphael that they shall become immovable as bars of iron, is in the habit of producing (by a few passes) such a condition of his entire frame, that his head being placed on one chair and his heels upon another, he can without other support, sustain the weight of a gentleman of twenty-two stone sitting down upon him. Nor is this all. Master Raphael's phrenological sensitiveness is, it seems, very great. On his organ of music being touched by the Infant Magnet he will beat time 'so accurately that on a slow measure being changed in any part for a quick air, no mistakes will occur in his accompaniment.' A degree of sensitiveness this, of which one has perhaps met with an instance or two before. 'Mutatis *mutandis*' the bill goes on to say 'similar results will be obtained by touching other organs.' The organ of combativeness, by-the-by, it is pleasant to find is singularly under control, for we read that the Magnetist will by a single pass render futile all Master Raphael's attempts to strike her, and 'will reduce him when at the height of his frenzy to such extreme rigidity, that he will again sustain a heavy weight, *as before*.' This 'as before' seems to point at the twenty-two stone gentleman again, and we think there are but few of us whose combativeness would sustain its full

energy were we to be sat down upon by a personage of so plethoric a habit.

Who, let us ask again, could resist this bill of fare? Your Eye-witness read it through once and said, 'I should like to see it.' He read it through again and said, 'I *must* see it.' But when he had read it a third time he said, 'I *will* see it.'

Let us at once acknowledge that the aspect presented by the Assembly Rooms on the occasion with which we have to do was the reverse of exhilarating. A little strip of Kidderminster carpet to comfort the feet of the occupants of the front row of chairs, a small and rickety dressing-table with some seedy damask for a cover, and two composite candles upon it, to light a room about fifty feet long; twelve persons seated on benches round the dressing-table, and four bathing-machine boys upon a distant form, who had been let in for nothing—these were the component parts of the coup d'œil which greeted your Eye-witness when he entered the Rooms at Smallport, bent on examining dispassionately, and estimating truly, the performances of the Infant Magnet. 'Eh, sirs!' but those rooms were melancholy. Traditions are in existence of days when duchesses have danced minuets in them, and of weekly assemblies of wit, and rank, and beauty, which took place in these apartments in the palmy days of Smallport. Those days are over now, and only the traditions of them hang about the place, just as the plaster ornaments hang from the ceiling, the cobwebs from the cornice, and the paper in damp strips from the cracking walls.

There seemed no particular reason why the twelve persons who were waiting for the exhibition to begin should communicate with each other in whispers, yet it was in such covert tones that they spoke; and everything they did was so furtive that the crunching of the apples which the bathing-machine boys were secretly eating resounded through the room till it echoed again. In such a silence as this it will readily be imagined that any unusual noise would attract immense attention, and that when from behind a huge screen

which nearly covered one end of the room there arose a sound of pouring out of water, of the clinking of a soap-dish, of the friction of soap upon a towel, of the escape of this slippery article, of its recapture, of rubbing, of rinsing, of splashing—when these sounds, we say, reached the ears of the audience, and when they reflected that the Infant Magnet alone was behind the screen, then it was that the conviction forced itself upon them that this gifted creature was engaged in her toilet, or (to use the emphatic language of the hale housemaid who sat behind your Eye-witness), in the act of 'cleaning herself.'

It has been said that the Public was aware that the Magnetic Infant was the only inhabitant of the screened-off portion of the Room. And indeed about this there could be no sort of doubt, for both the Professor who exhibited her and Master Raphael (the proprietor of the Rigid Legs) were standing by the door, assisting the old lady who took the money, and whose imperfect acquaintance with the currency rendered their presence highly desirable. The sounds above described, however, emanating from behind the scenes and affecting the audience to unseemly titterings, brought the Professor at once into the Room, and caused him to break into a state of violent and noisy activity which rendered the rinsings of the cleanly Magnet wholly inaudible.

Three large flat-irons, or tailors' geese, having been, at three separate journeys, solemnly brought from some place of concealment, and placed with a bang, and a show of much effort, upon the dressing-table, the Professor began his address. He was a little, middle-aged gentleman, compact and stout, with short bristling hair, and a dyed moustache. The Professor leant one hand upon the table, and placing the other akimbo, eyed his audience with an expression which was a mixture of suspicion, of impudence, and of a guilty foreknowledge that they would not be half satisfied with what they were going to see. But that his stock of words appeared to be singularly limited, that he had a habit of leaving his sentences incomplete, abandoning each com-

monly at an early stage, and getting on to the next in a sanguine hope that it might turn out more manageable than its predecessor; but for these defects, and an imperfect acquaintance with the rules of grammar and the subject he was lecturing upon, the Professor would have been, perhaps, one of the most remarkable orators of modern times. The eloquence of our lecturer was of this sort (the reader must suppose that his delivery was slow, and that pauses occurred from time to time, and were sometimes of great duration):—

'It is generally admitted; or rather I should say that the remarks which I am about to make. The practice, or it would be preferable to say the science, of mesmerism, or rather animal magnetism. It is well known that even among the ancient Egyptians, one of whom the renowned Mesmer. And indeed in our day, many are of opinion; but there have always been, at all times those whom the evidence of their senses will not convince. While in the study of phrenology, being myself engaged in, and I shall feel happy to examine the heads of any lady or gentleman present, and at my temporary residence in the neighbouring town, number 48 Swallow Street. The exhibition which is about to take place in which the heavy iron weights which are placed as you see; and the medical world, the science of mesmerism having in its noisier aspects yielded to the calmness of truth; the accomplished young lady, whom I came in contact with but eight days ago, being here to illustrate my meaning; with these few remarks explanatory of the nature of the performance and of mesmerism or rather animal magnetism; we will introduce'—

THE INFANT MAGNET appears from behind the screen. A little girl, apparently about fifteen, but probably older, with a good, intelligent, and rather pretty face, and a singularly elegant and graceful manner. After curtseying to the audience, she seats herself at the table, places her little finger, and the part of the inside of her hand between it and the wrist, upon the handle of one of the flat-irons, and—what? tips up the end of the iron which is farthest from her, the

other extremity remaining upon the table. This is done several times with each of the irons in turn.

The effect of this prodigious feat is somehow so very small upon the audience, that the Professor seems to find it necessary to apologise.

'We have been disappointed,' the Professor says, 'of the music. The musician having at the last moment; the effect is materially increased by the adaptation of the action of the weights to tune; the whole exhibition is marred. If any lady or gentleman present would; there is a piano in the room; they would confer a great obligation. Perhaps some lady or gentleman would—' and the wretched professor looks helplessly and hopelessly from one unpromising face to another; and the bathing-machine boys wriggle uneasily on their form as if they thought they were being personally alluded to. There is a great pause.

'If any lady or gentleman would play any little tune, it would add to the interest of the performance,' remarked the Professor.

'What sort of a tune?' said a tall man, standing in a dark part of the room, and leaning against the wall.

'Any tune in the world,' said the Professor.

'"Home, sweet home?"' inquired the tall man.

The Professor, after consulting the Magnet, and after much argument in an under tone, says that the Magnet would prefer any other. But it would appear that the tall man does not know any other, for he remains immoveable against the wall. There is another pause.

'If no lady or gentleman will oblige us,' says the Professor, 'we must do as well as we can without. The exhibition will now proceed.'

More tipping up of one end of the flat-irons. At length the Magnet, who seems inclined to laugh, whispers to the Professor. He leans over with his knuckles upon the table, and smiles in a sickly manner upon the audience.

'Perhaps some lady or gentleman would like to feel the weight of the irons, or to endeavour to raise them as done by the Infant Magnet.'

Silence and inaction on the part of the audience, each member of which seems to think that his neighbour is being addressed.

'It will materially increase the effect, if any lady or gentleman would try,' says the hapless Professor. After which there occurs the longest silence of all, which is broken by an explosion of laughter coming from one of the bathing-machine boys, who is promptly turned out. After this, there is more whispering between the Professor and the Magnet; and then the lecturer, leaning again with his knuckles on the table, and again regarding the public with a sickly smile, says once more, 'It will materially increase the effect of the performance if any lady or gentleman will kindly favour us with the loan of a watch.'

Assuredly this is an exhibition in which the audience is expected to contribute largely to its own amusement. There is by no means that alacrity to answer to this last appeal that might have been expected; but at length a noble and public-spirited Frenchman (the same that bathes daily with his wife and family all in rose-coloured dresses)—this excellent person is pushed forward by his wife, and with agony depicted in every feature, tenders his watch to the Professor.

The goose is again tipped up, and the watch placed, to the increased anguish of the French gentleman, where the end of the iron would fall if allowed to descend. The iron is suffered to drop again till it nearly touches the watch-glass, and is then canted back again.

'Aie!' cries the proprietor of the rose-coloured bathing-dress, snatching his watch up again and putting it in his pocket, 'enough for me.' Nor will all the persuasions of his better half, with whom he carries on a long and brisk argument in their native tongue, persuade him to risk his time-piece again. The Professor during this discussion looks on with a smile of proprietorship, as if it was part of the entertainment, and it being impossible to eke out the time any longer, it is now announced that Master Raphael (the rigidly disposed young *gentleman) will* promptly make his appearance.

Well, he was an under hand ill-looking youngster, about sixteen or seventeen, short of his age, but tough and strongly built. The flat-irons and the dressing-table being removed, this young gentleman placed himself in the middle of the room, standing in the attitude of the genteel beggars who on Saturday night place themselves by the side of the kerbstone with a box of lucifer-matches in their hands, and looking down at the pavement. The Infant Magnet then proceeded to make the mesmeric passes as if she were dressing him with magnetism from the head to the feet, and wrapping the last up with especial care in the mesmeric garment. The Professor standing all the time with his arms extended in an expectant 'pose,' and ready to catch our young friend as soon as he should go off.

Very soon and very suddenly he does go off, tumbling all stiff and straight into the Professor's arms, who propping him up from behind, invites the audience to come and test for themselves the rigidity of his limbs in any way they think proper. They think proper to answer to this appeal very readily, and (especially the bathing-machine boys) to pinch the calves, to wrench the jaw, to grasp the throat, and to tug generally at the limbs of Master Raphael in a very edifying manner. While all this was going on, a member of the company with whom your Eye-witness happened to be acquainted, suddenly pulled the boy's clasped hands asunder, the firm locking together of these being one of the principal evidences of the lad's general rigidity. He who had thus succeeded in invalidating this test, now called the attention of the Professor to what had happened.

'That-er-er-signifies-er-nothing,' was the unanswerable explanation of this truly great man. As for the boy he quietly and scientifically *joined his hands together again* as soon as they were liberated, just as if he had been conscious. Perhaps he was.

Our young friend was next placed on his back with his head and shoulders supported by one chair, and his heels *and part of* his legs by another. The Infant Magnet and

the Professor then stood upon him, making a united weight of probably some seventeen stone. If no part of the boy but the back of his head and the extremities of his heels had rested upon the chairs, this would have been a surprising feat, but it was not so; the chairs were brought well under his shoulders, and half-way towards the calves of his legs.

By many graceful passes and wavings of a white pocket-handkerchief, the Infant Magnet now succeeded in de-mesmerising the superior half of Master Raphael's frame, leaving only the lower limbs in the magnetised state. In a word, the next act exhibited was to be that which bears the exquisitely humorous title of 'The Rigid Legs.'

The Eye-witness has since himself performed this feat, and so may the reader.

The French gentleman already spoken of, with whom the E. W. ran up an immediate and close friendship, and whose evidence he has had recourse to throughout the writing of this narrative. This gentleman, looking over the writer's shoulder just as he committed the last sentence to paper, puts in with much alarm a reasonable objection enough.

'Excuse me, ma friend,' he cries, 'vaat is this you say, "and-so-may-the-reader"?'

'Et bien, le lecteur, oui,' replies the E. W., willing to air his French, as the Frenchman to practise his English.

'But vaat eef your readare is a charming "Miss"?'

The reader then who wears a beard and pantaloons, may, without being possessed of any very great muscular power, achieve the 'Rigid Legs' act just as completely as it was performed by Master Raphael. Let him (the reader) seat himself in a strong chair, and take a firm hold of the seat with both hands; let him stretch his legs out straight in front of him not touching the ground, and he will find that he can keep them in that position with a full-grown human being (we should recommend it to be a 'Miss') standing upon his insteps. It will be necessary that the amateur acrobat shall be held into his chair, as was the case with Master Raphael, as otherwise acrobat, chair, and all, must infallibly

be overbalanced and brought to the ground by the weight of the 'charming Miss.'

'The Rigid Legs' having been done justice to, a few more lucid remarks follow from the Professor.

'It will now be our interesting office to consider, or rather that of the young lady to so act upon the phrenological organisation; nor can any more interesting study be conceived; and most persons will admit. The sensitiveness of our young friend's cranium being such; whether we test the organ of self-esteem, or of veneration, or that of *sublimity*,' (an organ of sublimity!) 'but the fearful struggles and violence demonstrated in the exhibition of that of combativeness no person can doubt the truth of the science after witnessing; and myself being as I have remarked a practical phrenologist. Whilst the development of tune can be brought into action by music alone; if any lady or gentleman will kindly favour us by playing any little air'—

'*Would* any lady or gentleman oblige us by performing a tune upon the piano?' continued the lecturer, as if the idea had suddenly occurred to him, and had never been suggested before.

All this time the Infant Magnet is engaged in preparing Master Raphael for the phrenological test. She now pronounces him to be in perfect readiness, and comes to consult the Professor as to the exact position (to the eighth of an inch) of the organ of self-esteem. Having, with the assistance of this gentleman, got it to the utmost nicety, the Magnet does not let it go again; but continues to poke the bump in question with her Infant fore-finger, till our youth, beginning perhaps to find his situation uncomfortable, gets up and proceeds to develop his idea of the usual manifestations of the quality in question. He begins by buttoning up his coat at the waist (which it appears is an infallible sign of self-esteem). Then he converts his fore-finger and thumb into a barbarous imitation of an eye-glass, and holding this phantom optical aid to his eye, walks round the room with his head on one side with a kind of paralytic strut, and

stopping suddenly from time to time as if he had forgotten something.

And he *had* forgotten something—he had forgotten that there were those in this room who knew that the hideous vulgarity of all this was incompatible with any state of unconsciousness, and that these were just such actions as would be thought by some low mountebank the best calculated to hit the ideas held by the general public of the manner in which the organ of self-esteem most ordinarily shows itself.

The same mountebank had also taught him that the sublimest acme of veneration was to be shown by a figure kneeling upon one knee, with the head thrown back and the hands clasped in the attitude of the Exeter Hall negro, when he cries with a jingle of his chains, 'Am I not a man and a brother?'

But not the mountebank, nor the Professor, nor the Infant Magnet, nor the boy's mother had taken due pains that evening to prepare him for all emergencies in one important particular. They had sent him to the show in a 'dickey.'

The French gentleman interposes again.

'A deekey?' he says, interrogatively.

'C'est une espèce de chemise fausse,' explains the Eye-witness; going on to tell him that there is a dreadful subterfuge sold in shops (the sale of which should be illegal), which bears the semblance of a shirt, while in reality it is only the front of one, which stops as soon as it gets out of sight, and is called, it would be difficult to say why, a 'dickey.'

It was in the most frantic moment of the development of our young man's combativeness that the dickey came into play. It behaved very well for a long time. Through all the squarings and strikings out, the buffetings of the air, and the cuffings of imaginary adversaries, it kept its place; but when in the final crisis of destructiveness our youngster flung himself, wallowing on the ground, then the last thread, or the final tape, or the critical button, or something or other gave way, and this deceptive piece of wearing apparel dawned upon the company in all its native hideousness. It was too

much for the gravity of even the Magnet herself. All eyes went to the shirt-front; whisperings and covert laughter, and explosive splutterings of bathing-machine boys, gathered force and volume, till at last the attention of the combative youth himself was drawn to the derangement of his attire, and then it was that as he rolled over in one of his paroxysms he managed to turn his back to the audience, and your Eye-witness saw him capture with the hand that was most hidden from the public the floating ends of the treacherous 'dickey,' *and thrust it back into his waistcoat!*

Climax, and finishing stroke of humbug! Noble, rapt unconsciousness of this sublime seer! Descent of this exalted youth from the magnetic trance to a sudden consciousness of a deranged shirt-front! Let the reader for one moment consider the full perfidy of this scene. Let him regard this (taking with it the joining together again of the hands that had been pulled asunder, as described above), and let him say if there is not something almost horrible in such mendacity as is here suggested, and in the thought that the great names of magnetism and science are brought in to make the jest go down! And one thing more let the reader take note of—that the paltry slender fabric of this poor and barely hidden sham was shored up and held together by the aid of two young creatures, a boy and a girl entering newly into life, but entering it by what a road of falsehood and deceit! Truly it was a sight to sadden and to amuse at once; and it was remarkable that those who were present at this sordid show were moved to laughter but for a moment, and left the place in gravity and silence.

For it was over now. This that has been related was the last of it. It was time to leave off after such a display as this; time to discharge that unapplauding, unconvinced audience; time for the Professor to make his announcement, 'the exhibition is now over,' for the Infant Magnet to get behind the screen, and for the Eye-witness coming out into the pure air, and, looking from the chill stars with which the sky was 'pierced' to the vast stretched-out ocean at his feet,

to wonder that in this great creation the greatest work of all should so often mar a world which was made to be the theatre of its noble deeds, and play such pranks as these that make the angels weep.

III.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE PROVINCIAL DRAMA OF ENGLAND, WITH A FAITHFUL ACCOUNT OF A PERFORMANCE AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, THAMESEND.

THE Eye-witness would be doing nothing if he did not keep the public acquainted with the leading amusements of the day. It has been his fortune to discover, blushing unseen in a remote country town, a drama of such surpassing interest, so abounding in situations, in tableaux, and (as will be seen by the bill) in thrilling combats, and withal so new and fresh in plot and construction that the E. W. would feel himself wholly wanting in allegiance to the reader if he failed to make his discovery public; there being no person whose philanthropy has attained any reasonable growth who would wish to keep to himself those enjoyments which are increased by being shared by others. Come, we will begin at the beginning. The Writer was first struck of a heap and then drawn into the Thamesend Theatre by the play-bill in the pork-butcher's window. It was pinned on to a very fat leg of pork; and the E. W. regrets to say that occasionally his eye would wander from the document under perusal, and loiter with cannibalic fondness on the rounded symmetry of the joint to which it was attached. Let us see how the play-bill (without the pork) affects the reader.

THEATRE, THAMESEND.
for the
BENEFIT OF
MR. RUPERT RAVENSWOOD.
On Friday, September 30.

The Performances will commence with a Drama of intense interest, abounding with thrilling Combats, entitled the
BRIDGE OF DESPAIR.

Mons. Dumaque ..... Mr. Sims Capt. Lafont..... Mr. Hickson
Mons. Girad ..... Mr. Perry Pierre Bertrand. Mr. Scrope
Phillipe Pipon ..... Mr. T. Sims *Paul Gerrole* ..... Mr. G. Sims
MICHEL (the Dumb Guide) Mr. R. RAVENSWOOD
Jacques Lebomme... Mr. F. Sims *Marcel* ..... Mr. Q. Sims
Madame Minot.....Mrs. Sims *Jeannette*.....Miss Sims
Adelle ..... Miss Sabina Sims

Pierre Bertrand's Inn.

The lilly (!) of France—the happy vintage and abode of love—Adelle's goodness the theme of her moral neighbours—she welcomes them to the village festival—this day must be devoted to feasting and merriment! but one is wanting to complete the joyous assembly, and that one is Michel the Dumb Guide—the consent given to Adelle's marriage with Michel is overheard by Paul Gerrole—he vows his love, and is rejected—his vow of revenge—arrival of Michel and Captain Lafont—the letters entrusted to Adelle—Gerrole changes the pistols—the lover's farewell and departure.

Gerrole and Marcel in ambush—the road *intercepted*—the attack—the pistols false, and

Death of Captain Lafont.

The Dumb Guide's despair—Michel beats down Marcel who is wounded—Gerrolle returns to the conflict.

Terrific Combat № 3.

Michel is overpowered and beaten to the earth—escape of Marcel and Gerrolle—entrance of the Military.

Michel accused of Murder!

Grand and Impressive Tableau!

THE TRIAL!!

Evidence strong against Michel—the discharged Pistol—sudden appearance of Gerrolle who swears that the knife and pistol now produced, stained with blood, were the property of Michel—affecting meeting of the Lovers.

Wretched Michel

Thy Doom is a Gibbet.

THE BRIDGE № DESPAIR.

Over the Victim's Grave—Tableau.

Cross of Death!

The once merry Pierre, the father of

ADELLE A MANIAC.

He sinks in prayer at the foot of the Cross—Marcel and Gerrole in search for the

Missing Pistol!!

That pistol which if found by another would expose them to the world as the monster's (!) nature had created them—Gerrole sees Pierre, his horror and remorse.

THE BLOOD OF HIS VICTIM IS FRESH UPON THE STONE CROSS.

Pierre and the pistol—yield it old man! Never! a light breaks in upon me

YOU ARE THE MURDERER

And poor dumb Michel may yet be saved! Help!! Help!!! DEADLY STRUGGLE—Arrival of the Military—the discovery and Death of Paul Gerrole.

TABLEAU.

The rest of the bill related to after-pieces and matter of a comic nature, which it would be unnecessary, and even unwise to quote, lest it should damage the effect of so masterly a composition as that which has now been given to the reader, just as it loomed upon the Eye-witness from the pendant pork in the sausage-shop at Thamesend. Who could resist such a bill as this?—a play '*abounding* in thrilling combats.' Here is rich promise; there is no stint here, no puttings off of the fight to the last; a combat may turn up at any moment it is evident. The dumb man too is inviting in the last degree. And the trial—suppose the dumb man was to give his evidence in dumb show, what a thing that would be, and it's quite on the cards! Then what a play it is evidently for poetical justice and stern morality, not to speak of a great engineering feat which is accomplished in the course of the action of the drama, and the announcement of which, as conveyed in these words—"the road intercepted"—has doubtless already startled the reader, who, having perhaps (like the E. W.) only heard hitherto of the intercepting of letters and such small gear, will be anxious to ascertain how the intercepting of the Queen's highway is ordinarily accomplished.

The theatre at Thamesend is not so large as Exeter Hall; it is not so large as the Adelphi, or the St. James's, or Miss Kelly's; in short, it is as small as it well can be; and the stage—though larger than that of the Smallport Theatre, where the proscenium was so low that your Eye-witness could only see the face of the tallest actor from the mouth

downwards—the stage was of such confined dimensions that when a scene had to be set in front of another the performers had a hard matter to keep their legs out of the footlights, and looked as if the background must inevitably end in pushing them over into the pit. But what matters size after all? the Thamesend Theatre was beautifully decorated, with the whole solar system on the ceiling complete, except in one place, where there was a great round hole, which looked as if one of the larger planets had been unable to stand it any longer, and had bolted out into space. Once more there was plenty of room. There were twenty-seven persons present (after half-price), and the boy, who wanting to pass from one part of the gallery to another, achieved his object by a hand-over-hand process round the rail of that portion of the building, must have done so out of pure fancy, as he might easily, if he had thought proper, have stepped over the benches on which his friends were but sparsely scattered. As for the audience, it was mainly composed of young Thamesend swells, who all tried to imitate each other in their costume and manners, taking their lead from the young man at Hicks and Vicars's, who on the previous day had served the E. W. with that box of dinner-pills to which he attributes the gradual break up of his digestive powers. The young man from Hicks and Vicars's tried hard to be languid and not interested in the performance, but the 'thrilling combats' proved one too many for him, and in the course of the progress of the drama he became violently and breathlessly excited.

And well he might, for to be sure this was a play which, even without the thrilling combats, might reasonably awaken the interest of anybody. Let us consider it carefully. The reader has already seen that this drama commences with 'the lilly of France—the happy vintage and abode of love,' and that 'Adelle's goodness is the theme of her moral neighbours;' he has seen that lily is (and why not?) spelt with two l's, and he has observed that the name of Adele is similarly favoured with a redundancy of letters. All this he has seen, but

there are other things which he has *not* seen. He has *not* seen the moral neighbours, and it is well for him. The first blow has been struck at the morality of the Eye-witness, the thin end of the immoral wedge has—so to speak—been introduced by the sight of those moral neighbours, of their dirt, their discouraging seediness, and (especially with regard to the main spokesman) their intemperance. Indeed the principal moral neighbour was supported from behind by his friends, and delivered his dialogue with a glazed eye and an impaired and gulpy utterance.

But if the reader (and his morality) has gained by not having seen the moral neighbours, he has greatly lost in having missed Adelle's father, the merry Pierre. This young person was blessed with a perennial youth, which set at defiance altogether the elastic cotton baldness which had been pulled on by different dirty fingers till it was relieved by a black line from his face. He was evidently the youngest member of the company; and as Adelle herself was a stout matron of about forty, and her lovers were both stalwart veterans, the aspect of affairs was, as may be imagined, new and fresh in the last degree. The miscreant Gerrole having failed to induce this youth to grant him his daughter's hand in marriage, vows vengeance, as will be seen by reference to the bill, and soon gets an opportunity of wreaking it. Enter Captain Lafont, who being a pedestrian traveller and in want of a guide, is of course dressed in a military frock, cotton drawers, and hessians. He wears a cap with a gold band, carries a riding whip to help him across the mountains, and is further prepared for a scramble by having on his heels an immense pair of gilt spurs. In a word, he looks like something between a seedy courier and a bad wax-work of a deputy-lieutenant. The dumb guide, who in addition to being dumb has been adorned by nature with a nose large enough to weigh a less muscular man to the earth—the dumb guide, the faithful Michel, steps forward appropriately accoutred for an alpine journey in a blouse, an open shirt-collar, white trousers, and pumps *with buckles* in them.

Now the faithful Michel being the accepted lover of Adelle is obnoxious in the eyes of the wicked Gerrole, so he at once determines to waylay the travellers and murdering them both, to get rid in this way of his rival, and at the same time to become possessed of the wardrobe of the officer, Captain Lafont—of which let us at once say, frankly, we wish him joy. The wicked Gerrole now associates in his villany the miscreant Marcel, and they both get into ambush on a spot which the traveller and his guide will infallibly pass—and this is the process called intercepting the road. This getting into ambush is a matter of great difficulty, and is not accomplished without much noisy stamping about the stage and profuse gesticulation. It is at last, however, tolerably successful, considering the smallness of the 'cover,' and the largeness of the performers: the murderers are made all snug, the thunder and lightning begin, and the dumb guide and Captain Lafont appear on the scene. They descend the rocks at the back, and it then becomes evident that, as far as being a guide is concerned, the faithful Michel is little better than an impostor. He gropes about, advances to the 2nd entrance left, and being received there by a flash of lightning, tries the 3rd entrance right. Finding that this will not do either, he retires to the back of the stage, raises himself on tiptoe and kisses his hand, looking as stage directions say "off." Having performed this feat at the back of the stage, he next comes to the front and repeats it there; and many other equally intelligible pieces of pantomime would doubtless have followed, if Messrs. Marcel and Gerrole had not suddenly burst out of their ambush and attacked the captain, who was sitting all this time helplessly on a big stone, and looking more like a wax deputy-lieutenant than ever.

The faithful Michel rushes to the rescue; but to his dismay finds that his pistols, which Marcel has previously tampered with, miss fire. The murderers kill the unfortunate deputy-lieutenant; but, having done this, appear inclined to behave very handsomely to the dumb guide, for instead of *settling him upon* the spot, they both retire to opposite corners of

the stage, and commence a series of gesticulations highly valuable as calisthenic exercises, but liable to the objection, considering their present intentions, of involving a great loss of time and opportunity. While they are thus engaged, the dumb guide retires up the stage, and (let the reader mark this), happening to look behind a large stone cross, suddenly discovers a couple of serviceable swords of the kind called 'combats.' This is one of those touches of nature which carry an audience by storm. How true, and at the same time how opportune, is this discovery in a wild desert of two swords, placed behind a stone just as if they had been put there on purpose! The swords having turned up, then, just in the nick of time, a thrilling combat of three comes off without further delay. It is a beautiful combat. The dumb guide, with one of the opportunely-discovered swords in each hand, tackles both his enemies at once, and accommodates them with every kind of up stroke and down stroke, of over stroke and under stroke, and all sorts of fancy strokes besides, keeping time to the music all the while, just as if it was in play. Such an honourable combat too! When anybody gets out of breath, the others leave off, and wait till he has got his wind before they set to work again. The combat went on so long, and the audience approved of it so highly, that your Eye-witness began to think that this drama was not only to 'abound' in thrilling combats, but was going to *be* a thrilling combat altogether; and was just resigning himself to this conclusion, when a discovery was made by Messrs. Marcel and Gerrole that the military was approaching in the distance: and this circumstance altering the whole posture of affairs, and causing these two gentlemen to decamp very promptly, it happened that the dumb guide was left on the stage alone, with the remains of the deputy-lieutenant, and in this position was discovered by the military. 'The military' consisted of three regimental coats, all of different patterns; of one pair of white trousers, and two pair of gray. These garments, which were of vast size, were inhabited by two invisible boys and a girl; *but such* is the force of allegiance in

the dumb guide, that when the clothes charged him with the murder of the deputy-lieutenant, he gave in at once and suffered himself to be led away like a lamb. The clothes formed around him in a manner highly creditable to them as disciplined troops, and he was carried off to be tried.

The Trial! What shall be said of that trial? a trial where the principal witness is the accused person, and he a dumb man. Surely this looks well. The hall of justice is a small apartment enough, with two arm-chairs placed sideways to the audience, and in front of them a small desk with hangings to conceal its legs, which are probably of deal. There is no one on the stage when this scene is discovered, which makes its awfulness the more impressive. Presently, however, an elderly gentleman, in a black coat and the late deputy-lieutenant's hessians (which, alas! he will want no longer), enters, and is immediately recognisable as the principal moral neighbour who appeared at the beginning of the drama, and who was then, or appearances did him great injustice, to a certain extent under the influence of cordial waters. This gentleman, who has not lost the vitreous eye, or the somewhat vacillating roll which characterized him earlier in the evening, takes the stage once or twice, advances to the footlights, and looks as if he was going to say something, but after certain workings of the under jaw, which are unproductive of sound, thinks better of it, and retires to one of the arm-chairs, into which he sinks rather heavily, but with great majesty notwithstanding. This achievement is followed by the entry of a very tall young man indeed, in a very short clergyman's gown, who skims across the stage in so rapid a manner as to suggest that he is ashamed of his legs, which indeed are calculated to cover him with confusion; he gets them, however, promptly under the hangings of the desk, and breathes once more. It is evident that these are the two judges who are to try the prisoner, and as it is also obvious that they either don't know their dialogue, or have got no dialogue to know, it is quite a relief when the military brings in the prisoner through the folding-doors in the flat.

and when other myrmidons of justice entering and escorting the fainting Adelle, their seems a reasonable prospect of a commencement of the proceedings.

The proceedings then are opened by the young justice with the disheartening legs, who charges Michel with the murder of the deputy-lieutenant. It might be expected that the military would now come forward as witnesses, but they remain speechless, and the young justice gives their evidence for them. This is the case for the prosecution, and as there is no counsel on either side, it is uncommonly soon over. So is the speech of the unfortunate Adelle, who in vain endeavours to show that her own personal conviction of the prisoner's innocence is sufficient ground for his discharge. There remains then but one more chance for the unfortunate Michel—his own defence, which is to be conducted in dumb show.

The once moral-neighbour-now-justice-of-the-peace having in a strong Irish accent requested the myrmidons of the law to stand aside and allow the accused room for the necessary gesticulations, and having besought Adelle, who understands the prisoner's signs, to correct him (the justice) if he misinterprets them, gives now the signal to begin, and the dumb man goes at it with a will.

Perhaps if there is any charge to which the evolutions of the injured Michel are open, it is that of monotony. The dumb show, which has been described in a previous scene, where we found the faithful guide striding to the back of the stage, raising himself on tiptoe, looking off, and kissing the tips of his fingers to vacancy—then striding to the front and repeating the same manœuvres—these gyrations turn out to form a great part of our performer's stock in trade. It is, however, very consolatory to find that these evolutions, though liable to a charge of monotony, are (to the justice at any rate) intelligible in no ordinary degree, the learned judge, assisted by Madlle. Adelle, being able to construe his signs into such clear and distinct evidence, that it almost strikes one that if witnesses were always dumb (and counsellors too sometimes) we should get at the truth all the easier.

Be that as it may, it is quite certain that when the dumb man softly strides across the justice-hall (which is soon done), and rising on his toes, looks up to heaven, then strides back again and points down to the ground, and subsequently advancing into the middle of the stage, kneels on one knee and smites his breast—it is quite certain, we say, that it would never occur to the reader to explain these phenomena in the following manner:—

'It will be obvious,' says the Irish J. P., 'it will be obvious to all persons of ordinary intelligence and perspicuitee, that the meaning of the prisoner in this introductory portion of his evidence is as follows:—He says that t'was about the evening toime when a streenger arroiving in the village demanded some person to act as a gyuide in conveying him across the adjeecent mountains. Prisoner, am I jostified in thus interprating your signs?'

The dumb man laying his hand upon his heart smiles with a smile, for which alone he ought to be ordered for immediate execution. The J. P. turns with mingled exultation and drowsiness to his colleague—the young man with the discouraging legs and the short gown, who now takes no part in the proceedings beyond insanely fiddling with a pen, and says, 'I was roight—Prisoner, ye may now proceed with your evidence.'

The dumb man, who desires nothing better, is at it again in no time. He strides again across the justice-room and again rises on his toes, then he slightly ducks at the knee-joints, then he crosses again and clasps his hands, then he strides to the folding-doors and looks out of them, then he hides his face with his hands, then he returns to the middle of the stage, smiles, goes down on one knee, kisses his hand, and slaps his breast.

There is even, it seems, more profuseness of meaning in this than in the last display. The J. P., who has been asleep, starts up (so suddenly, that one would say he had been pinched), and after staring a short time wildly about him, goes on to expound the prisoner's evidence.

'I gather,' he says, 'from what I have just seen, that he started on his journey in company with the streenger, who wore a milithary appearance, and had a sloight cast in the oi. The sun was descending upon or rather behoind the earth, and the little birds were singing their matins to the decloining orb, when suddenly, on approaching that part of the road in which necessitee compelled them to pass over the bridge, now known by the sad appeleetion of the Bridge of Despair, a terrific storm burst upon the travellers, and at the same toime they were assaulted by two hardened ruffians, destitute aloike of human sympathy and of a due regyord for the awful majestee of the tempest which was exploding upon um. Prisoner, you may proceed with your evidence.'

More soft striding, more rising on tiptoe, more kissing of fingers, more kneeling on one knee, more slapping of breast; but all interspersed this time with a frantic, flourishing, and sawing of the arms.

The J. P. waking up again all of a heap is unhappily at this particular moment not equal to the occasion, and your Eye-witness being so near as to be almost on the stage, observed that *the dumb man was prompting the judge*, and was 'throwing a whisper' at him with all his might.

'A thrilling combat ensued,' gasped the justice, 'a combat of a terrific neeture between three desperate men; for the fourth, the unhappy streenger, had fallen at once a victim to the blows of the assassins. Prisoner, ye may proceed.'

Dumb show as before, and prompting continued to the end.

'It was about this time,' continued the justice, stimulated by much whispering from the dumb man; 'it was about this time that the milithary—the brave defenders of our neetive roights and libertees—came upon the scene, when the murderers alarmed by the majestee of their appearance fled from before them, and the accused being found near to the remeens of the unhappy and murdered voyager was accused of the foul deed and brought to justice.'

As there is no jury to charge and nobody to be consulted

there seems every reason, at this juncture, to conclude that the trial is at an end; when suddenly Messrs. Marcel and Gerrole rush into court, and, producing the pistol with which the murder is alleged to have been committed, prove it to be the property of the devoted Michel, and the scale turns against him in spite of every sort of disclaiming, demonstrating, and expostulatory gesture that can be imagined, and enough kneeling and breast-slapping to have convinced—one would have thought—the most obdurate of judges. He is not to be convinced, however, so Michel is ordered for execution, and being removed by the military, the stage is cleared of everybody except the two justices, who alike keep their places, though probably for different reasons, the elder being retained in his seat by slumber, while the younger, having got his legs under the desk and out of sight prefers keeping them there to exposing them again to the public eye by crossing the stage. A dreadful fate awaits him, for the descending scene catches on the desk, and his legs are visible under it as he again skims across to seek, in the recesses of the Green Room, that trousered security of which he has been so cruelly deprived.

The Bridge of Despair scene again, and 'the once merry Pierre, the father of Adelle—a maniac!' It is a curious and instructive thing to observe in what a subtle manner the mental derangement of the once merry Pierre is suggested to the audience. It is entirely done by the agency of glazed calico. It seems, to judge by appearances, that the father of Adelle, on parting with his reason and ceasing to be the once merry Pierre, has purchased or otherwise become possessed of a long 'breadth' of black glazed calico: in this he has cut a hole for his venerable head, and has popped it on over his ordinary clothing. The effect of this is much more horrible, and certainly more indicative of insanity, than anything else that could have been done at the price. Habited thus, the old gentleman is discovered groping about in search of a certain missing pistol which is to clear his future son-in-law's character. Of course the weapon in question turns

up behind the stone cross, where on a previous occasion it will be remembered that two swords happened to be discovered just when they were wanted.

Will it be considered that the Eye-witness has been wanting in closeness of attention to the plot of the drama, which he has described thus carefully, if he at once owns that from this point he was wholly unable to see his way, or to make out the principle upon which its happy termination was brought about? He is, he frankly acknowledges, not in a position to inform the reader how the discovery of this pistol cleared the character of the dumb guide, or why Messrs. Marcel and Gerrole who knew that it would do so, and who came upon the scene just as the once merry Pierre found it, did not knock this maniac father on the head, wrap him up in the breadth of glazed calico, and tumble him over the Bridge of Despair into the raging torrent below. If the E. W. is not able to account for these circumstances, far less can he explain how it happened that the military should turn up again at this moment, that the Irish J. P. should happen to be passing just when he was most wanted to convict the two villains, that Adelle should know all about it, and bound on to the stage followed by the dumb guide who had been liberated, we can only suppose, by electric telegraph, so rapidly did his appearance follow the discovery of his innocence. At all events, accountable or unaccountable, all these things were so; and the maniac father, whose restoration to reason was all that was wanting to make everything satisfactory, feeling this, acted *like* a father, and abandoning his glazed calico and his lunacy together, became the once merry Pierre again, and lived so ever afterwards.

It would be a thousand pities to disturb the delicious impression left by the conclusion of this play upon the mind of both writer and reader, by any account of the matter of a comic nature by which it was succeeded. Still less is it the intention of the Eye-witness to enter into any criticism on the merits or demerits of a piece appealing perhaps even more strongly to the *heart than* to the head. There is,

however, one point on which he confesses that he is inclined to take exception against the conduct of the management, and that even is more in connexion with the play-bill than the play itself. It will be remembered that in the document which has been quoted above, the drama of the Bridge of Despair was announced as 'abounding in thrilling combats,' and it is in this one respect that, it appears to the writer, the word of promise has not been duly kept. He was able, with close scrutiny, to detect but one combat, thrilling or otherwise, throughout the performance. Now it might be said that this one, in consideration of the fact that there were three persons engaged in it, was worth half-a-dozen ordinary battles; but this is not such an explanation as the public has a right to demand, and if this was all that was meant the drama should rather have been described as abounding in thrilling *combatants*, than in thrilling combats.

With this reluctant word of censure, extracted from him by the sense of his responsibility as a dramatic critic—and by nothing else—the E. W. concludes his report, glad to give to every other part of the performance that unqualified approval which it is always so delightful to be able to bestow. Having thus given publicity to his discovery of the beautiful drama, which has been so minutely examined, the E. W. wishes to make it known to the managers of the different metropolitan theatres that he will be happy to supply them, at any moment, with all such further particulars and information concerning it as may be necessary to its production on the London boards.

IV.

HIS EVIDENCE WITH REGARD TO THE WONDERFUL DOINGS OF A CERTAIN NOBLE COMPANY OF STORY-TELLERS.

Oh, for something new under the sun! Some new amusement, some new experience. Oh, for some bill of an entertainment which shall not comprise the turning into ridicule in vile burlesque of stories by which our sympathies have

been rightly and nobly appealed to all our lives long! Oh, for an end to the reign of female pertness as a stock article by which the purveyors of public amusements may always feel sure of filling a house! Oh, for less hornpipe dancing by young ladies dressed as stage sailors! Oh, for some new thing to give life a zest!—Oh—why what's this?

BEDFORD HEAD TAVERN,
Upper King Street, Bloomsbury
(*Leading from Holborn*).
Proprietor, George Tilling.

THE
STORY TELLERS.

Every
Sunday Evening.

First Story at Eight o'clock.

The Eye-witness was walking through the thoroughfare called Upper King Street, and was soliloquising in the words with which this report begins, when happening to look up at the moment of passing the Bedford Head Tavern—what *is* a Bedford head?—he observed a great green-lettered bill in the window of the tavern in question, and on pausing to read it, found that it announced what has been printed above.

The Eye-witness read the bill three times, then went and fetched a friend who lived close by in Red Lion Square and made him read it, and finding that this friend made the same of the announcement that he did himself, he then, and not till then, believed the evidence of his senses. But what an extraordinary thing! What could it mean?

The Story Tellers!—was the Eye-witness in the East, was he among Bedouin Arabs or in Bloomsbury? Was this some strange club that met together to listen to stories? and if so, who told them? Did they draw lots which of the members was to relate an experience? Or was it a public thing, where any person present might be suddenly pounced upon and compelled to tell an anecdote, whether he knew one or not. Oh dear, oh dear! and this was only Tuesday, and it

would be necessary to wait nearly a week before any of these questions could be decided.

For your Eye-witness had not stood staring at that bill two seconds before he had quite determined in his own mind that he would attend the very next meeting of the Story Tellers, come of it what might. No risk of being expected to tell a story himself should deter him. He would learn one by heart—he would revenge himself on society for what he had gone through in old Longyarn's company, by relating one of that gentleman's most prolix narrations; in a word, he would do anything rather than not be present on the very next occasion of the assembling together of the Story Tellers.

So dreadfully afraid was the E. W. that something would happen to frustrate his intention; that the Story Tellers would suddenly give up their séances; that the Bedford Head would be prematurely cut off; or that some other horror would occur to put an end to these meetings—that he made it his practice (at great inconvenience) to pass through Upper King Street every day, to see if the bill was still up in the windows.

There are few things on which more perfect dependence may be placed than the flight of time. It moved on steadily and calmly enough, and in nowise hurried itself on the Eye-witness's account; but still it *did* move, and in due course the day which had been so anxiously expected came round, and the bill was still in the windows.

The Bedford Head Tavern might by some matter-of-fact persons be called (saving the reader's presence) a Public House. It has a bar—and a very nice thing a bar is; it has a parlour; it has a secret retreat behind the bar for the landlord and landlady, and occasionally for the young lady in ribbons and the gross youth with his shirt sleeves tucked up and a short apron, who works the German-silver handles: this retreat is inaccessible except by jumping over the bar; it is windowless and air-proof, and yet its inhabitants look well and happy enough for anything.

'What's for you?' said the gross youth, holding a glass in

one hand and a beer-handle in the other, as the E. W. approached the bar to inquire for the head-quarters of the Story Tellers. There was a dark passage visible near the entrance to the parlour, and dim visions in its innermost depths of a steep wooden staircase.

'What for you, Sir?'

'Story Tellers,' answered the Eye-witness, as if he was giving an order.

'Refreshment ticket,' said he of the short apron, rapidly, 'refreshment ticket, fourpence, have what you like, up-stairs, first floor.'

Refreshment and Story Telling all for fourpence! what a mercifully economical entertainment. Oh, noble landlord! Oh, philanthropic Tilling! may you prosper for this.

Following the advice of the gentleman with the rolled shirt-sleeves, and ascending the steep wooden staircase before mentioned, the E. W. soon found himself in a large upper room, over that bar of which affectionate mention has just been made. It was a curiously-shaped room, with a bulk-head sort of projection in the middle which contained the staircase. Opposite to this bulk-head was a rude sort of platform, apparently made of packing-cases. A high-backed chair was placed in the centre of the platform, and before the chair a little round table with an auctioneer's hammer upon it. The rest of the apartment was furnished with tables and forms, packed together as closely as possible, and interspersed with wooden chairs of the Windsor pattern.

Taking a seat exactly opposite the platform, in order that nothing might escape him, and ordering a glass of brandy and water, the E. W. set himself to watch the proceedings, and, as at first there were no proceedings to watch, to examine the audience. It seemed to consist chiefly of mechanics and workmen with their wives. Some of the last had brought their babies with them, possibly from not knowing what else to do with them; and one woman, perhaps for a similar reason had introduced her dog into the assembly, a little black-and-tan terrier of a very shabby type, which lay at her

feet half covered with sawdust. The room was already well filled, and was at last as full as it could be. The audience was well-behaved and orderly, and perhaps the person of the highest grade in the room would be the errand-clerk at an attorney's office.

After about half an hour's waiting, and after many throes of anxiety lest he should even yet be disappointed; after listening to so many orders for old ale, and mild ale, and mixed ale, as made him feel bilious by deputy; after some unpleasant reflections on the nature of the atmosphere, which was so completely composed of tobacco smoke that you might have cut it into solid blocks with a hatchet; after noting the captious-looking man, who wore a suspicious aspect, with a long pipe depressing one corner of his mouth, and the man who looked (as will often happen with our fellow-countryman of this class) as if he were ashamed of being in a place of amusement, and by his looks disparaged the entertainment before it began for *being* an entertainment; after observing the patient little mechanic with the large family and the long endurance, who is also happily often to be seen in this country, and who is ready to put up with whatever is given him, to stare and wonder, and not understanding anything that is going on to be pleased all the same; after observing all these things for some time, your Eye-witness began to hunger for the event of the evening, and to get exceeding fidgety and impatient.

It comes, however, at last. The moment has arrived which is to clear up the mighty mystery of the Story Teller. There is a sudden hush, a general turning of eyes towards the door. The little mechanic looks up from behind a baby, highly interested (both of them); the man who is determined not to be amused pretends not to look; the suspicious man changes his pipe to the other corner of his mouth, in order that he may bring his eyes to bear upon the door; for it is part of his nature that his eyes are always turned to the side on which his pipe is not. All these things indicate that *some great* portent is at hand and indicate it truly, for in

another instant the landlord of the Bedford Head has scuttled briskly into the room, escorting in the most courteous manner—a lady!

Your Eye-witness sunk back in his Windsor chair, and drew a long, deep breath. So, this was the end of it. Always something one had not prepared for. A lady! A plump lady of the type called 'professional;' a shrewd, plump lady of about five-and-thirty, well dressed, with a good, intelligent face, and courage enough to ascend the platform and take the chair, right under the gas; and, without the slightest encouragement or applause from the company, to clear her throat and plunge at once into the business of the evening.

The little mechanic involved himself in such entanglements with his large children in his endeavours so to place them that they could see the professional lady, that he became perfectly invisible himself, and could only be detected (by sharp scrutiny) at rare intervals, when a child tumbled down or otherwise changed its position; the man who was determined not to be amused, turned his back on the platform, and looked disparagingly and gloomily upon the company; and the suspicious man, finding it necessary to turn his eyes away from the door again, and towards the professional lady, shifted his pipe again as he made the optical change just mentioned, and moved no more.

If it was the opinion of the Prince of Denmark that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in his friend's philosophy, it is certainly the opinion of your Eye-witness that there are more things in this strange world of London than are dreamt of by any of its inhabitants, unless they go ferreting about perpetually in search of its oddities—as is the practice, and has been for years, of the writer of these words. To take the case we have in hand. What a strange state of things was here! In whose philosophy has this ever been dreamt of, that every week an assembly of persons come together in this manner to listen eagerly to a series of stories which reach them more easily

when thus brought before them, than when coming home to them in print?—it not being with many of them a matter of such facility to read as we are apt to imagine, judging by ourselves.

The story itself, as related by the professional lady, was a sort of make up from a French tale; it was about a young surgeon and an actress, who coming out at Paris, and creating a great sensation, causes the medical youth to fall desperately in love with her. It also happens that the charms of the débutante (pronounced by the Story Teller, depùtant) have a similar effect upon a more distinguished personage, who is indeed no other than the Prince de Condé (the last word being pronounced Cond). This state of things naturally brings about many remarkable results, the surgeon being employed by the Prince de Cond, who is in ignorance of his passion, to attend professionally on the depùtant, and being further stimulated to do his very best for her by a cheque for a large amount, bearing the Prince's signature, which the young surgeon finds upon his table. It is curious to observe how fond people, who have not five shillings to bless themselves with, are of dealing when they get into the realms of fiction with cheques to a large amount, scattering them about plentifully enough, and making them over, with the greatest liberality to anybody who will have them. On one occasion, when the fever of the depùtant is at its height, our medical friend, on going to her lodgings to pay his accustomed visit, finds the room empty, and the invalid flown. The extraordinary nature of this proceeding is, we must suppose, the means of so far unsettling his mind, as to a little blunt the acuteness of his sense of honour, for upon perceiving a note lying on the bed directed to the depùtant, we find that he takes it up and reads it, justifying this step to himself by reflecting that he is a medical man, a piece of reasoning in which we find it difficult to follow him, and which seems to suggest the necessity of a lock and key to one's desk whenever medical attendance may become necessary.

The letter which thus falls into our surgeon's hands, proving to be an anonymous communication, by which the depùtant is exhorted to be present, at all hazards, at the theatre that very night, sends the young surgeon off with a hop, skip, and a jump, to the Porte St. Martin, where he besieges that most inaccessible of places, a stage door, with but indifferent success. And here again, we find the liberality of our Story Teller coming out again, the young surgeon scattering five franc pieces about in all directions, in his wish to secure the good offices of the doorkeeper and his assistants. After sending message after message to the depùtant, and all of them in vain, the surgeon abandons the attempt, and going round to the front takes his usual place in the pit, a proceeding on the success of which every one who remembers what a French pit and its crammed condition invariably are will not fail warmly to congratulate him. The first person whom our medical friend perceives in the theatre is the Prince de Cond, in the stage-box, and—sad to say—in intimate conversation with a Russian Princess of inconceivable beauty. The reader will recognise the story when it is further mentioned that upon the drawing up of the curtain the depùtant acts the story of her own life, and when she dies at the end of the piece, does really die then and there before the public.

Such is the brief outline of the story with which the professional lady opened the evening's entertainment. It lasted about half an hour, and left the audience thoroughly mystified and bewildered. The interval which elapsed between this narration, and that which was to succeed it, was spent by the E. W. in endeavouring to extract from a weak young man, with an uncontrollable smile, who sat next to him, such information about the Story Tellers as this youth was able, in the intervals of smiling, to impart. From the evidence of this embarrassed personage, he gathered that these weekly meetings had been going on for many months, that it was a successful speculation, that this was the first evening on which a lady had appeared, (more female occupation deve-

loping itself), and that on previous occasions two gentlemen had entertained the company on alternate Sundays, 'as you might say,' the young man added, 'turn and turn about.'

It appeared in a few minutes that the serious and comic stories were also administered, 'turn and turn about,' for when the professional lady again took her seat upon the platform, it was to enliven the company with a tale of a hilarious nature.

Concerning this narration, it is the intention of your Eye-witness to say as little as he possibly can. It would be impossible to conceive of anything more dreary than its mirth, or more complete than its success. When the hideous fact has been mentioned that the name of the hero of the tale was Mr. Scamony Tottles, enough, let us hope, has been said to convince the reader of the appalling nature of comedy among the Story Tellers, and to exonerate the writer from reviving the recollection of his sufferings during the progress of this terrible narrative.

From the moment that the man who had determined not to be amused, made the discovery that he was intended to laugh at the history of Mr. Scamony Tottles, his face became a sight to behold. Steadily averting all countenance and support from the professional lady by still keeping his back to her, even at great personal inconvenience, this gentleman went through a series of convulsions in his efforts to suppress the explosions of laughter, in which the rest of the company indulged so freely that they made the glasses ring upon the table. The throes of this unfortunate man in his efforts to repress the strong tendency he felt to enjoy himself became every moment more terrible to behold. As for the rest, their reception of this story was one of the most remarkable things ever beheld by your Eye-witness. They screamed, they rolled upon the benches, the young man with the smile laughed so much, that he was obliged to get up from his seat and lean against the wall; and as to the little mechanic, what with much clawing by his children, what with the rarely known enjoyment of a little hot gin and water, and

what with laughter to a tearful excess, he became so moist and clammy that his very substance seemed to ooze out of the pores of his skin, and your Eye-witness will wager a refreshment-ticket of admission to the 'Story Tellers,' that he went out of that institution a lighter and a weaker man. It is useless to conceal the fact that the little man had everything to apprehend, on getting outside, from the grim and bony matron who bore his name, and who, sitting unmoved by tragedy or comedy behind her husband, would at those moments when his delight was at the highest, punch him severely between the shoulder-blades with the handle of her umbrella.

The Eye-witness is at the end of his report. After the second retirement of the professional lady at the termination of the comic story, and after a due interval allowed for the discussion, which now as on the conclusion of the previous narrative took place among the company, as to the merits of what they had heard; after these things, the E. W. recommenced his cross-examination of the young man with the smile. Finding that there was yet another story due—the allowance being three per evening—finding also that the sense of suffocation with which he had commenced the evening had not subsided, and that his nerves were in such a state of tension that he could no longer meet the eye of the baby opposite, he came to the determination that it was time to go. That baby opposite had never for one moment ceased to glare at the Eye-witness, and it was now sitting bolt upright in its mother's lap, and dying (hard) of tobacco smoke. Who could stand such a sight as this? besides there was really nothing more to stay for. The E. W. had solved the mystery of the Story Tellers, and was free to go forth and breathe once more the comparatively pure air of Bloomsbury.

V.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE VASTNESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE ROYAL ARSENAL AT WOOLWICH.

Your Eye-witness, in his present communication, is about to enter upon a subject of a more serious kind than any he has hitherto touched on, and one which is especially likely to prove interesting to the reader just at this time, when the thoughts of all men, more or less, are turned towards fighting, and when the science of war and all that belongs to it is a topic for ever in men's mouths.

Your Eye-witness has spent the greater part of two days in a careful examination of the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich.

Before proceeding to enter into any description of what he saw on the occasion of this visit, the writer wishes to record here his sense of the obligation he is under to Colonel Tulloh, and the other officers and gentlemen engaged in the superintendence of the different departments, for their readiness to facilitate his examination of the place, and to afford him every assistance which lay in their power towards forming a correct idea of the resources of this splendid arsenal.

The great war establishment which we are about to enter, and which covers upwards of 260 acres of ground, is divided into three departments, which are arranged in the following order—

The Royal Gun Factories, under Colonel Eardley Wilmot,

The Royal Carriage Department, under Colonel Tulloh, and

The Royal Laboratory Department, under Captain Boxer.

In the Royal Gun Factories a large portion of the brass and iron guns used in our army and navy are cast, bored, and finished.

In the Royal Carriage Department are made the carriages on which these guns are mounted, and by means of which they, and the ammunition they require, are conveyed from place to place.

While the Royal Laboratory department is for the construction of the heavy shot for cannon, of shells, bullets, cartridges, percussion caps, and many other implements of death and mutilation.

The order in which the Eye-witness visited the different wonders of this great workshop of destruction is that in which he now proposes to treat of them; and as the introduction with which he entered the Arsenal gates was to Colonel Tulloh, it was naturally the department under the especial care of that officer which the Eye-witness examined before any other.

It so happened that the day on which the writer first visited Woolwich was Friday, and that on that day, at one o'clock in the afternoon, the men employed on the works are paid their weekly wages. The amount earned by each workman during the week is calculated beforehand, and placed ready for him in a numbered compartment of a tray, before which each one passes in a regular succession. As the workman reaches the paying-place he hands in his ticket, on which his number is inscribed. Instantly the money in the compartment bearing the corresponding number is handed to him, and he passes on, the ticket which he has just given up being considered as a receipt. This is the only way in which the thing could be done. The number of men employed in the Arsenal reaches to something like 12,000, and as they work by the piece as well as by time, there are hardly two in the place who receive the same sum. It would be, therefore, impossible to calculate how much is due to each at the time of payment. The affair is settled, according to the arrangement just described, in a few minutes.

Through acres of timber, ranged in stacks, your Eye-witness was now conveyed to the great saw-mills of the carriage-department, where the logs from which the gun-carriages are made are handed over to a mass of machinery, by which they are hewn into shape with an almost inconceivable rapidity and precision. The timber is moved along on iron tram-ways which intersect the whole area of the

Arsenal from end to end, and from side to side, and is dragged by horses, and sometimes by certain mules brought over from the Crimea. These mules are of such immense size that they would be large even for horses, and are of such outrageous obstinacy and intractability that asses, or ordinary mules, are docile creatures in comparison with them.

To give the reader some idea of the energy which has been exerted during the last few years at Woolwich, it may be well to mention that before the late Russian war, the roads about the Arsenal, now so well paved and furnished with the iron tram-ways just mentioned, were in such an impassable condition, that the Superintendent of the Gun Factories informed the writer that four years ago he used to be obliged to go from one part of the place to another in fisherman's boots to keep out the mud. The changes wrought by the Russian war are obvious on every side; and the influence for good exercised by Colonel Tulloh, Colonel Wilmot, and Captain Boxer, meet one at every turn, and amply justify the amount of confidence which has been placed in those gentlemen by Government.

It was but a few years since that a travelling commission, consisting of the first named of these officers and certain other gentlemen, made an expedition through the North of England in search of any new invention which might be serviceable in the peculiar kind of manufacture under their superintendance, and the United States and the Continent have been ransacked as well for anything that could contribute to the success of the Arsenal works of Woolwich.

Amongst the machinery thus assembled together, the writer was especially struck by two sawing-machines in the Royal Carriage Factories, through which it will be remembered we are now passing. One of these was a ribbon-saw, and the other a circular-saw. The ribbon-saw was brought from Paris by Colonel Tulloh, and is an invaluable instrument in all cases where curved or intricate cutting is required. It is a ribbon of perfectly flexible steel, passing round and

round for ever like that leather strap or band, which every one has observed as being so important a part of all kinds of machinery. This ever-moving strip, which is not more than an inch wide and as thin as a paper-knife, has one of its edges serrated with teeth, and against this edge the thing to be cut is pressed continuously till it is through. To give some notion of the intricate cutting that may be achieved by means of this ribbon of steel, the writer may mention that he saw the letters V. A. which had been cut with much flourish out of a thin sheet of wood by this beautiful instrument.

Of a far different character from this delicate weapon was the next which attracted the notice of your Eye-witness. He had heard of circular saws, and had already conceived that such an engine must be a thing of mighty capabilities, but he had conceived nothing so fine as the fact.

Along the whole length of the saw-mill workshop, there ran a very narrow groove—much such an one as a flat pasteboard caldron will ascend through on the stage when the play of 'Macbeth' is in course of representation. Through this groove your Eye-witness was told that at the proper moment the circular saw would rise, so he drew back from it to a little distance and waited with much curiosity for what was to come next. In order to show the capabilities of the saw, a trifle in the shape of the trunk of a large tree had now to be brought to the saw-mill and wedged firmly into its place across the fatal groove. While this was being done the attention of the Eye-witness was solicited to other matters in the building; but still something seemed to whisper in his ear that he should keep his eye upon the groove, and he did so. He did well.

He had not kept his watch very long, before there slowly dawned through the aperture which he regarded so eagerly—a long steel tooth, hooked, pointed, terrible to look at. Then, as he continued to look, more teeth appeared in a continuous succession, all like the first hooked and pointed, and all, like the first, terrible to look at. As this dreadful instrument rose gradually out of the ground it became appa-

rent that these teeth were part of a vast circular plate of polished steel, which was very slowly but quite smoothly (or the effect would have been nothing) coming up out of the bowels of the earth, like the moon from behind a bank of cloud.

It rose then, thus stealthily out of its groove, till half the circumference of this huge spur-rowel was visible. Then for a single moment it paused, and then—flew at the tree which had been placed in its way, and with a screech like a cry of rage, deadly and remorseless, it tore its way through the trunk more rapidly than the writer can put these words on paper, and slowly sunk back again into its lair, like a monster that was gorged with blood.

Instantly availing himself of an offer to go down and visit this desperate character in his den your Eye-witness passed through a trap-door and descending some steps came upon him while he was yet burning hot and quivering with recent slaughter. Here, alone, underground, this savage of the saw-pit resides then in darkness. Here he meditates on past carnage and revels in the thought of more. And here too they come from above at times to sharpen up his wicked teeth till they yell under the file with hunger. There was something almost fearful in the suggestion of consciousness about this inanimate thing. Your Eye-witness could not shake it off, and thinks of the monster now in his dark and secret cellar with something of hatred in his wonder.

The wood thus cruelly dealt with is now passed on to other workshops where it is placed under the action of the different kinds of machinery which form it into the separate portions of the gun-carriages, ammunition vans, and other special produce of the Royal Carriage Factories. Of these branches of manufacture one of the most important, and certainly one of the most interesting, is the process by which are constructed the wheels which are required in vast numbers for the service of the cannon, and the perfect truth of whose construction it will be obvious to every one is a quality wholly indispensable to their action, and yet somewhat difficult of attainment.

It is in such a case as this that machinery strikes one at once as so invaluable. Thousands of wheel-spokes all alike, all the same size to a hair's-breadth, are required; what hand-work could turn these out with the exactness of machinery? Again, the circular portion of the wheel, the part on which it runs, is composed as most persons know, of a number of short segments of a circle, all of which when joined together form the circle complete. These separate pieces are called felloes. If they are not perfectly accurate how is the wheel to run? Once more, the carriages and the wheels made in this factory are destined for services which so put their strength to the test that even the extraordinary solidity with which they are constructed (and which must strike every one) is not always proof against the shocks they have to sustain. It will be seen at once how necessary it is in the event of any part giving way to have another member of exactly similar size ready to take its place. Here then is the function of machinery, and here that function is performed with a uniformity and regularity that leaves nothing to be desired. Here the felloes just spoken of are cut in the exact curve, and even with the alternate peg in the one and the hole for its reception in the other, which is to unite them together. Here the spokes are shaped by instruments which revolve so rapidly that they are not visible as they move, but which gradually and swiftly do their office as if they worked by magic.

Nor is this all. The putting together of all the separate parts of the wheel, which used to be accomplished by a long process of knocking and banging, is now effected by one squeeze of an hydraulic press, and effected not only more rapidly but much more completely. It is a curious and interesting arrangement this by which the wheel is finished, and is quite worthy of description. The different component parts of the wheel are brought together and laid on a flat surface. The nave is placed in the centre, the spokes are laid all round it, and radiating from it towards the felloes, which it will be remembered are the curved pieces of wood

which, when joined together, forms the outside circle of the wheel on which it runs; one end of each of the spokes is placed at the mouth of the hole, in the nave which is prepared for its reception, and the other end at the opening of a similar orifice in the inner or concave side of the felloe. The whole as it now lies looks like a disjointed wheel, all the parts of which require forcing together, a process which will demand an excess of strength, as all the joints are an exceedingly tight fit. Whilst you are thinking of this, you become conscious of a movement in your neighbourhood, you are aware of a general stir round about you of a slow and stealthy nature, and you hasten to ascertain what occasions it. Six blocks of iron advancing from six hiding-places on the edges of the flat surface on which the wheel was laid, occasion it. Each of these iron blocks is concave on the side nearest the wheel, and will obviously fit exactly the outside of the felloe towards which its course is tending. These rams are propelled from behind by hydraulic pressure, and advance towards the wheel with uniform strength and degree of progress. And here again that apparent consciousness of the thing operating, and the thing operated upon, which has already been alluded to in the description of the circular saw, suggests itself very strongly. Here again the machine is a tyrant, and the wheel a helpless victim, and when that dreadful squeeze which caused a creaking and whining of the wood that sounded like the groans of women in a crowd was withdrawn, and when the wheel visibly expanded throughout on its release, your Eye-witness thought that the perfectly audible sigh with which it did so, was heaved like a gasp of relief.

That squeeze over, all the parts of the wheel are together, and so firmly joined that even a drive over a newly macademized street (which is the strongest test your Eye-witness can think of) would not shake them, and the iron hoop being placed outside all, the wheel is completed, and ready to conduct the cannon to the theatre of its operations.

It is difficult to give the reader any idea of the amount of work going on at one time in these workshops at Woolwich,

of the number of wheel-spokes being operated upon at the same moment for instance. It is difficult to convey the impression of what may be called the orderly bustle which seems to characterise the place, the perpetual clatter of the machinery, and the rapid action of the busy hands that supply it. This Royal Carriage Department alone contains, as the statistical account informs us, twenty-two steam-engines amounting to a nominal power of 245 horses, but usually worked at between three and four hundred, three steam-hammers, 16 steam-boilers equal to 475 horse-power, and 4,265 feet of shafting in motion, transmitting the power to upwards of three hundred machines.

Infinitely delicate as are some of the processes connected with the Department just described, such as the cutting of dovetails and mortices, and the production of articles of intricate form by means of the guiding influence of a slip of metal having a profile of the required figure—infinitely delicate as are some of these operations, they are perhaps less so than those which are found in the vast workshops of the Royal Laboratories, which your Eye-witness next visited, and where shot and shell, fuzes, cartridges, rockets, percussion caps, and other deadly instruments, are made in numbers of which it is enough to say—taking one instance alone—that, during the late war, 10,500 shells passed through the shell-machine in one day of twenty-four hours.

The first process brought under the observation of your Eye-witness in the Royal Laboratories was that made use of in the manufacture of bullets. It is very simple, very easily explained, and singularly satisfactory. The lead, melted in a furnace, is poured out in a stream, as thin and liquid as water and as bright as quicksilver, into a long iron tube about a foot or perhaps more in diameter, and rising in a perpendicular position to the height of eight or nine feet. As soon as the metal has had time to set, but not to become cool, a mighty mass of iron of cylindrical form, and fitting exactly into the tube which contains the molten lead, descends

upon it from above. This great iron mass is perforated upwards throughout its whole length with a small hole of the exact diameter of a bullet. What is the lead to do now under this extreme compression? There is but one course open to it, which is to rush up through this small hole. It does so, and comes out at the top of the iron press in a long line, which is first wound upon reels, and then conveyed to another part of the factories, where it is chopped into pieces of the required form, which, by-the-by, is very much that of a long narrow thimble. The old round bullet is almost entirely superseded now by this one of oblong shape, though it is difficult to say, with the amount of discussion which is now going on upon the subject of rifles and rifle charges, how long this may be the case.

The writer has one of these thimble-like bullets before him at this moment, with the little box-wood plug and the admiralty broad arrow on its thinnest edge complete. As he examines it, noting the dull, hard point at the end, and poising the bullet in his hand, he thinks with sorrow how well that deadly weight is found to crush the subtle and tender mechanism of some organ more intricately beautiful a million-fold than the most complex and delicate piece of machinery that can be found even among the triumphs of man's invention which are exhibited in this strangely terrible place.

A strangely terrible place indeed, when one comes to think of it. A place where courteous and urbane gentlemen, who subscribe to hospitals and other charities, and who would not hurt a fly, retire into their 'studies' of slaughter, and mildly spend a morning in taxing their brains to devise an invention, which will cause the death calculations inscribed upon a fuze to work more truly, and to carry a greater certainty and a greater amount of destruction with them. Strange to think that this is so, and that as things are it is inevitable, and even right, and that the ingenious gentleman, who has found out that a shell filled with red-hot iron will sprinkle a fountain of death around it on its burst-

ing more completely than one containing a charge of ice-cold bullets, was only probably doing his duty, when, with all the cheerfulness which a successful morning's work engenders, he communicated his pleasant little discovery to the War Office.

After examining the process by which the rifle bullet is made, and which has just been described, your Eye-witness next followed his conductor to the workshops where the fuzes are constructed. These important instruments, which are placed in the inside of the shell, contain the deadly matter which causes it to explode at the proper moment, and are marked with a graduated scale, by means of which it can be determined to a second how long a time shall elapse between the moment when it leaves the mouth of the mortar and that when it bursts into fragments. Your Eye-witness was much struck by the immense number of processes through which one of these small instruments (not bigger than a beer-tap) has to go before it is completed, and by the regularity with which it passes on from one operation to another, of cutting, turning, tapering, and perforating. This fuze machinery is capable of providing eight thousand fuzes per day, and is mainly worked by young lads, who are employed here in vast numbers. There was one amongst those who especially caught the attention of your Eye-witness. He was a pale and sickly lad, who while working at one of these deadly little engines of carnage, had stuck into one of the holes of the machine at which he worked a bunch of red sweet-william. Curious instance of that bitter irony of life which meets one at every turn.

Percussion caps, stamped out of the sheet copper and lapped up at the sides into the required shape, are turned out here at a rate of which your Eye-witness can give no idea by figures. They are then filled, by one shake of the machine, with the requisite grains of detonating powder; and one drop of varnish to hold this in its place having fallen into each, the cap is finished, and turns out such a delicate little toy that an extra allowance is always given to the

soldiers in action to make up for those which are lost in their efforts to take them up in their thick and horny fingers.

The making of the cartridges, the thick paper tubes in which the bullet and its charge of powder are encased ready to be rammed into the rifle, is almost entirely the work of boys. These youngsters are not so industrious it seems as they might be, and various 'dodges' are tried to make them work. Over each boy's head, for instance, is placed upon a framework a ticket showing the amount of work turned out by the individual in question during the past week. This is a good idea, appealing strongly to their ambition and their sense of shame. Here, as throughout the Arsenal, the plan of working by 'the piece' rather than by time is found to answer perfectly; a man who is paid by 'the piece' obviously having every inducement to get a bigger 'piece' done than he who is paid by the hour. The hour wears away of itself, and the money is won; but the piece by no means *does* itself, and if not done is of course not paid for. Your Eye-witness thought he could tell by the look of the boys in the cartridge factory which had made most during the last week, without reference to their tickets, and certainly there was no occasion to look at that suspended over the seat of one little man who had fallen fast asleep with his head upon a heap of cartridges.

There are some branches of manufactory in this department which are carried on so rapidly that you find yourself in contact with the raw material and the completed article in the same workshop. Thus, in the factory where the sabots are made for the shells, you will kick against half the trunk of a tree with the bark on at one step, and the next will place you where the completed trencher on which the shell is to rest awaits your inspection. The manufacture of the barrels in which the different stores are packed for transport is also carried on with extraordinary speed. The staves cut out of the wood, bent to the proper form, put together and hooped, almost quicker than the eye can follow.

There was something especially agreeable to your Eye-witness about this peculiar branch of the works. He supposed that this must arise from his convivial nature and happy associations with barrels and what they contain. Alas! these are destined to hold nothing more toothsome than gunpowder, fuzes, percussion caps, and cartridges; and although we should doubtless be told by gentlemen of the tee-total persuasion that these are infinitely less injurious than the ordinary contents of barrels, the present writer is yet of the opinion that they are on the whole less satisfactory.

Passing through a large and rough covered building where old iron is wrought again into bars, your Eye-witness paused a moment to notice of what various and inconsistent objects this 'old iron' was made up. Bolts and bars, old cuirasses, ancient gun-barrels battered flat, are all mixed together, and sometimes you will find among these heterogeneous gatherings of metal waiting to be made into cannon-balls, many things that speak of peace and rustic homely life, so that by the side of an old gun-lock that has snapped away a hundred lives, you will see the latch that has belonged to some cottage door—a latch that children's fingers have often pressed, and round which the tendrils of the clematis above the door have trifled in the summer wind.

But there is no time here for thought. We are entering a place barred across to keep out intruders; it is the smiths' workshop where the shells are cast, and is vast, and black, and dark as such places are. It is barred across to keep people out because the smiths who cast the shells are such indifferent, careless sort of fellows that they will run against you if you don't take care and splash your legs with drippings of the red-hot liquid iron, which they are carrying about in caldrons in all directions. Wild reckless chaps these, who glare at you with eyes that show the brighter for their begrimed faces; fellows always grand, indifferent, and picturesque in their actions as smiths always are, and careless. Why there is a lad walking about the workshop and using an iron crowbar some six feet long for a walking-stick, and

apparently not the least affected by the fact that one end of it is bright red-hot.

Bright red-hot, too, is the liquid iron which in the casting of the shells pours out of the furnaces into the moulds, looking, as the stream descends in the darkness of the smithy, like a sheet of molten gold. It splashes over as it falls; and each splash as it drops to the ground, flashes in an uncertain radiation, like a star that is seen through tears. This is even a finer sight than the white-hot blocks of iron seen just before, which it almost blinded one to look at, and which seemed to scorch one's eye-lashes away as one stood at a distance watching it. The shells cast in this place are rolled along a sort of wooden trough which runs all over the department, and by which they reach the work-shops, where they go through the processes of cleansing, drilling, and bushing, and are finally conveyed when finished to the wharf.

There is in one part of the enclosed space belonging to the Arsenal at Woolwich a place set apart by itself, and separated entirely from the rest of the works, which at once strikes one as wearing an aspect of its own. Surrounded by water, divided from the rest of the Arsenal by a canal communicating with the Thames, there is here a marked quietness and hush, which is very different from the other portions of the great Laboratory, but especially from that just described, where the rattle of the machinery and the clang of the hammers cease not for a single moment. Here too are trees and verdure; the workshops very small, and with large spaces between them. In the canal, branches of which intersect the whole region, are boats of a peculiar flat-bottomed construction, and with covered cabins, like gondolas; and here and there are placed, at regular intervals, fire-engines which, covered over with a canopy to keep them dry, have strangely enough a look of litters in which patients struck with fever are carried to the hospital. There is about this isolated place a stilled sense of apprehension, which

suggests that it is a territory of risk, and the head-quarters of danger.

And so indeed it is; but ordered with such care, guarded with such watchful diligence, that the place is a triumph of precaution, and a standing honour and credit to all connected with its organization. It is here that the cartridges are filled, the rockets driven, the signals prepared, and, in one word, it is the peculiar region set aside for the execution of all the more dangerous operations connected with the arsenal.

Before entering this Department, your Eye-witness, and the gentleman who accompanied him (and to whose patience and courtesy he is much indebted), were shod in leather slippers, lest by any chance there might be a nail in the heels of their boots, which coming in contact with some grain of grit, might raise a spark of fire. In the room in which they were thus shod were hanging the ordinary clothes of the workmen employed in the place, who are all compelled to put on the safety-dress of the War Department, parting with their own gaments before they enter on their labours, lest it should happen that an old tobacco-pipe or a lucifer-match, or anything else considered dangerous by the authorities, should be introduced into the work-shops.

The houses in which are carried on these different processes of danger, are long low buildings, fire-proof, and constructed with one end entirely open, and simply glazed as a window, so that in the event of an explosion, the line of direction would not be towards the adjoining powder-sheds. There is also between each of the buildings a massive buttress, or, as it is properly called, a 'traverse,' of solid brick-work and immense thickness, which could act as a check on any spread of the explosion. One building of the old kind still remains standing by itself. It is as remarkable for its extreme lightness of construction, as the modern buildings are for their extreme solidity. This used to be considered the safest plan, to make such workshops as were used for

purposes where explosion might be apprehended, so slight, that in the event of an accident they would fly to pieces without resistance; a plan in exact opposition to the modern system, and certainly infinitely less rational. In this old edifice the rockets are still driven with the old machine called a 'monkey,' simply a leaden weight raised by pulleys and suffered to drop, at regular intervals, upon the composition which is to be driven into the rocket-tubes.

In this Department, too, the fuzes are filled with that composition which is to burn slowly on till the moment when reaching the particular hole of communication fixed upon, it touches the powder in the shell, and the bursting takes place. The accuracy of this is, of course, of immense importance, and attained in wonderful perfection. Here also the fireworks required for signals are prepared, and every necessary combustible process carried on. The covered gondola-like boats mentioned above are used to convey all these inflammable wares, when finished and packed, to the magazines where they are kept, which are certain old hulks placed far out in the river, and beyond the reach of accident.

It is gratifying to be able to add that, owing to all these admirable precautions, no explosion has taken place in the whole of this Department, nor does there seem any reason to apprehend that any accident can occur, while so much care and watchfulness continue to be observed. Everything is done here with this view of diminishing the risk; and even the plantations and shrubs which have been noticed above as rendering this part of the Arsenal so unlike the others, have been planted with the view of keeping sand, dust, or grit of any kind from being blown towards the workshops. There is plenty of grass, too, in the enclosed spaces among the embankments on which the buildings stand. And here a curious emblem of peace and war caught the attention of your Eye-witness; for in the midst of all this danger and warlike preparation, the grass in these little meadows had grown to such luxuriance, that some men were making hay.

It was somewhat of a surprise to your Eye-witness, when on requesting that he might be allowed to follow the course of a gun's creation from first to last, he was taken into a large bare-looking brick building, which apparently contained nothing but certain conical heaps of dirt piled up upon the floor. It was still more of a surprise to him, however, when the superintendent of the place, approaching one of these heaps, and taking up some of the powder and crumbling it between his finger and thumb, said, 'This is what we begin with.'

'Do you mean to tell me,' said your Eye-witness, 'that cannons are made of *that* stuff?'

'They could not be made without it,' said the superintendent; and with that he proceeded to develop the whole process from beginning to end. The story was told intelligently and well, and the reader shall have the benefit of it.

The heaps of dirt which had caught the attention of the writer, and which it had surprised him so much to hear were indispensable in the construction of the mighty guns which he had seen placed about the Arsenal—these heaps of dirt are composed it seems of a mixture of sand and a sort of fine loam, with the powdered dust of coke.

A large mass of iron tubing of much greater dimensions than the largest cannon that was ever seen, is the next thing required. It looks so like the iron drains which one sometimes sees placed by the side of the road when repairs are going on in the sewerage, that for the sake of explicitness we will take leave to call this tube a 'drain,' throughout this description of the gun-casting operations. Inside this drain then, is placed a model the exact size and shape of the gun which is required, and the space between this and the inside of the drain, which is considerable, is completely filled with the composition of sand, loam, and coke dust, just described, which is forced in, in a moistened state. It is needless to say that this composition takes the exact shape of the model which it surrounds, even in the minutest degree. If, however, the model were now withdrawn, the

mould which it left being moist would of course tumble to pieces. So the next thing to be done is to put the whole affair into a huge oven, and there bake it till it is perfectly firm and hard. The model is then taken out with safety, and a complete impression of a cannon is left in the inside of the drain-resembling tube, as perfect as the print of Friday's foot-mark on the sand of Crusoe's desert island. The next thing to do is to convey the whole of this bulk to the pits in which the guns are cast. This is done by means of travelling cranes, which run upon rails high above one's head, and then the drain with the impression of the cannon in hardened loam in its inside, is placed in a perpendicular position in the pit, with the breech end of the future gun downwards, and the mouth, or what is to be the mouth, upwards. The process is now simple enough. Close to the opening of the pit is a mighty furnace, and from it the iron of which the gun is to be made, reduced to a liquid by the agency of heat, pours into a receptacle which the workmen call a 'sow,' (more about that presently). Thence it runs along a spout, and falls a mass of blazing, splashing, red-hot liquid iron into the mould we have spoken of, which bears, as will be remembered, the impression of the model cannon. The liquid iron of course fills up this impression with perfect exactness. It is then allowed to cool, the joints of the drain are unfastened, the mould breaks up, and there is a solid mass of iron the exact shape and size required, and almost ready to be bored.

It is now conveyed into another building where its 'dead head' is cut off. This 'dead head' is a large mass of iron which renders the cannon when it comes out of the mould, about one-third longer than is required. The gun is made with this addition, because it is found that the worst part of the iron, or its scum, rises to the surface, so that in a casting the uppermost portion of the iron is less dense and strong than that below. If, therefore, the gun were cast the right length at once, the iron at the cannon's mouth (which it will be remembered was uppermost as the mould stood in the

pit) would be porous and imperfect, whereas by this plan the porous and imperfect portion is cut off, and the iron below is even improved by the condensation effected by this superincumbent weight.

This overplus of iron being removed, the next process the cannon goes through is called being 'centred.' That is to say, that the centre of the section left by the removal of the dead head is found, and in it a small hole is bored. At the other end of the gun there is, as most of our readers know a sort of nob or projection. The use of this and of the hole just mentioned become now very apparent, for in every machine through whose rough handling the gun has now got to pass, there is a socket into which this nob will fit at one end, and at the other a steel point which fits into the hole. Supported then at each end by these means, the gun revolves with perfect ease in spite of its immense weight, a capability which is of great importance, as the whole finishing and boring process makes this facility of revolving the most indispensable of qualities. The gun revolves now, more or less till it is done. It revolves while the superfluous iron is being pared from off its outside, being scraped as it turns by steel edges, which peel off the supererogatory iron as easily as a sharp chisel deals with soft pine wood. It revolves while its outside shape is being completed, and the refinements of taper and polish imparted to it; and it revolves lastly while it is being bored. For in this last operation that it undergoes, the gigantic gimlet which gouges with slow persistance a hole some six or eight inches in diameter does not turn itself, but simply advances, forced onward by a dread pressure of wheels and machinery behind it. The gun it is that turns, and not the instrument that bores. This boring, which is a long process, being accomplished, and the lock adjusted, the gun has only to be proved, and it is ready for use—ready to break down a rampart, to destroy a dozen lives, to make a hole in a ship's side, to carry deaths with one charge, and to announce a Prince's birth with another.

There is in the museum attached to the gun factories, a

very curious register kept of the history of each gun, and how it has stood the proof. In this register, which your Eye-witness was permitted to see, the guns which fail under the test are recorded as well as those which are pronounced fit for service. It goes into the minutest details; and even the state of the weather at the time of the gun's casting, the degrees of temperature, the quarter of the wind, the pedigree of the iron of which the gun was made, where it came from, and by whom it was supplied: all these things are put down most carefully, and form a register of immense value and interest. In this museum, too, is an extraordinary machine by which the iron is tested before it is used at all, and the degree of pressure which it will bear accurately ascertained. Your Eye-witness saw this machine made use of in a manner he could hardly have conceived possible. The iron to be tested in this case was tried by weight, the question being how much pressure it would take to *tear it asunder*. The writer was much interested in this experiment. To him it seemed impossible that a piece of iron could be pulled in two. The thing appears almost impracticable even with wood. Let the reader take a lucifer-match, which is about the slightest piece of wood one can think of, and let him, taking hold of each end, try to pull it asunder. He can snap it across, of course, almost by a thought, but he may pull for ever and it will not come apart.

The piece of iron to which the writer saw this extraordinary test applied, was shaped something like a dice-box, large at the two ends and small in the middle. Each of the ends (having a shoulder to prevent its slipping) was firmly grasped in the vice-like claw of the machine, and screwed immoveably tight. One of these claws is a fixture, the other is connected by means of a lever with the steel bar at the end of which the weights used in the test are placed, and the machinery is so constructed that every added ounce tends to pull this claw farther from the other. They are kept from flying asunder simply by the piece of iron which is to be tried, and the degree of pull upon this augments, of course,

as the different weights are added at the end of the lever. It is the last hair that breaks the camel's back, and it is the last pound that pulls the iron in two. It was at a pressure of about 28,000 pounds that the iron parted with a mighty crash, leaving an end in each of the claws of this remorseless machine.

Among the many objects of interest in this museum a new method of firing large guns by electricity ranks conspicuously. It is an immense improvement on the old system, as an anecdote related to your Eye-witness by the superintendent will show. The guns used formerly to be fired by means of a fuze, and it was the custom for the gunner to ignite several of them at once along a whole row of guns; and then while the fuze was burning, and before the fire reached the charge, he had time to run away and get out of reach of the recoil, which in these large cannon is very considerable. An accident, however, which occurred one day when some practising was going on in the Woolwich Marshes, and which might have cost several lives, may have helped to direct the attention of the authorities to the imperfection of this plan, and in good time. Some men were firing at a mark in the artillery ground, and the guns were placed in the customary manner in a row, side by side, and pointed over Woolwich Marshes. The gunner lit the fuzes as usual, and skipped off to a place of security. The first gun went off in the proper direction, harmlessly enough, but unfortunately in its recoil it knocked against the one next to it with such force that it turned it round with its muzzle towards Woolwich; and before anything could be done to prevent it, had discharged a 68-pounder shot into the town.

That shot which might have carried death and mutilation with it, fell, by a merciful chance, in the Dockyard, and was buried deep in a massive brick wall, which it struck and shattered. According to the new system such an accident is impossible, the gunner stands at a distance, and fires each gun singly by pulling a string.

Included within the province of the Royal Gun Factories

is the manufacture of brass guns as well as iron ones. They are made almost in the same manner, and the process is so little different from that already described, that it need not be entered into. The great advantage of brass over iron guns is in their superior lightness, a very valuable quality where rapidity of locomotion is desirable. The Royal Gun Factories, when in full operation, are able to keep up a supply of eighteen iron guns per week.

It will be remembered that in the account just given of the mode of construction adopted in the manufacture of iron guns, mention was made of a certain receptacle into which the liquid iron flows, and which is called by the workmen a 'sow.' The manner in which English artizans bestow these animal names on inanimate things is sufficiently remarkable to make the subject worth reverting to for an instant. They not only call this magazine of liquid iron a 'sow,' but they have also gone farther with the elegant image, and given to the iron which runs out of it the name of 'pig.' Again the machine by which all the great weights are lifted is, as everybody knows, called a 'crane,' and in the travelling cranes which move the guns from place to place, the part of the machinery which does the practical work bears the title of the 'crab.' It has been mentioned in another part of this article that the instrument by which the rockets are driven is called a 'monkey.' This tendency to apply animal names is by no means confined to those workmen who are connected with machinery, but is prevalent among the lower classes generally. There is an engine used by tailors which is called a 'goose,' and the British tar has given to a certain instrument of punishment the name of the 'cat-o'-nine-tails.'

The writer was much struck in going over the Arsenal by the obvious effect upon the different workmen of the peculiar branch of occupation in which they were engaged, insomuch that each trade seemed to leave its stamp upon those who followed it. Who has not observed, for instance, that engineers as a class are apt to be fat, and that they are taciturn men, who from long living in a clatter of machinery,

which renders their voices inaudible, have got at last to give up talking generally as a bad job? The only known instance of a loquacious engineer was the late Mr. Albert Smith's, and it will be acknowledged that *he* used to find some difficulty in expressing his ideas. Who has not remarked that carpenters are ordinarily a cheerful and communicative race, that superintendents of machinery are the most intelligent persons in the world, and delightful to talk to, and that smiths—as has been said before—are always picturesque, and that whether they 'strike while the iron is hot,' or idle against the bellows, there is always something grandly careless in the way they work or lounge?

Into these and many other matters, suggested by what he saw and heard at Woolwich, the Eye-witness would gladly enter at length were he not curtailed by want of space. This report has already reached a considerable length, and what remains to be told must be said in as few words as possible. Were it otherwise, were the space at his command less limited, the writer would gladly describe the excellent arrangements connected with the Infirmary, the Library, and Schools which are attached to the Arsenal, and through which he was taken at the conclusion of his second day at Woolwich. As it is he can only mention that these things exist, that every comfort is provided for the workmen who may be disabled through accident, and medical attendance for the sick. The beds in the Infirmary were so clean, the room so airy and cheerful, that the Eye-witness almost felt inclined (being much fatigued) to take a siesta there himself. The Schools attached to the Arsenal are of great value, as the boys are trained on the spot for their future labours; and though an attendance of eight hours per week is all that is exacted from them (in consideration of their other work), they had yet, many of them, attained such a proficiency as to have passed out of arithmetic into mathematics and equation.

It is worthy of remark that the Library at Woolwich is found to answer better than the Reading-room. The men

dislike to turn out when once they have reached their homes after a hard day's work, and the cheap newspapers enable them to get what information they require without leaving their own houses. This operates against the Reading-room; but the Library, from which they may take books to their own houses by a trifling subscription of fourpence per month for labourers, and sixpence for artizans and foremen, is very popular. Your Eye-witness observed that the shelves where the novels were kept were almost emptied, so great is the enjoyment of 'fiction' among these hard-worked men; and he also remarked that the demand for 'Locke on the Human Understanding,' for 'Choker on the Law of Nations,' and 'Shuttle on the Differential Calculus' was far from brisk.

As your Eye-witness passed out of the gates of Woolwich Arsenal (even the posts outside are old cannons), and as he reflected on all that he had seen, he was struck by the healthy tone and the activity that pervaded the whole place, and sought to trace it to its source. The great activity observable in all these different departments, succeeds a condition of affairs precisely the reverse. The long peace which preceded our Russian and Indian wars had been productive of a deadly stagnation and inactivity; just as, in individuals, long success and quietness will lead to a sleepy condition from which it takes some stroke of adversity to rouse them. The Russian war was such a stroke, and was of absolute service in calling the attention of Government to the desirableness of an increased show of energy in connexion with our arsenals and dockyards, and to the necessity of a greatly augmented expenditure, which has turned out, as all judicious liberality does, the safest and wisest of economies. When is this otherwise? Where is there such bad economy as in stinginess—where such certain saving as in a wise but courageous outlay? The saving effected by Government in preparing their own stores, and doing away with contracts as much as possible, is very remarkable, and is suggestive of the importance of carrying the system yet farther, and even, *perhaps, of* applying it to matters connected with the Com-

missariat Department. One instance of what has been saved by the new plan may be mentioned here in illustration of what has just been said. The cost of a single shell, when furnished by contractors, used in its completed state to be estimated at one guinea—they can now be made at the Arsenal for about thirteen shillings! Nor is this all. The saving is effected, and a greater point still achieved in the superiority of the article manufactured by Government to any supplied by contractors.

Your Eye-witness, in concluding this report, thinks it necessary to say one word in explanation of the view he has adopted of the subject under consideration, and of his mode of treating it.

He deemed it useless, and worse than useless, to enter into intricate explanations of the particular processes by which the different classes of machinery which he has attempted to describe performed their different functions. He has done this advisedly, and for several reasons, one of the most powerful of which he begs now to submit to the reader. The present writer believes that no phraseology whatsoever could, by any means, convey a notion of the action of this machinery to uninitiated persons; and he believes that though the *operations* carried on in the Arsenal may be perfectly explained, the *manner* in which those operations are performed cannot, and that if it could it would be interesting simply to the manufacturer, who can get it elsewhere. The Eye-witness has endeavoured to give the impression made upon him *as* an Eye-witness by the wonders of this great Arsenal, and to give some idea also of the energy which is here at work to provide those defences which the reader helps to pay for every time that the gentleman with the ink-bottle at his button-hole, and the receipt-book in his hand, comes round to collect the taxes.

Having concluded his report of what he *did* see at Woolwich, the Eye-witness now wishes to say a few last words about what he did *not* see. He did *not* see the Armstrong gun; but only the ouside of a building in an unfinished state,

which he was told was being erected for the construction of such weapons.

The tendency (which is a very strong one) to keep secret all the particulars connected with the exact nature and capabilities of the Armstrong gun seems to the Eye-witness perfectly rational and good. The rumours which creep out upon the subject—nay, the descriptions and diagrams which have appeared, could be of little use to foreign powers without a degree of accuracy which they neither have nor profess to have: an accuracy which could only be insured by such minuteness of examination and such exactness of measurement as are not at present—owing to the precaution of government—obtainable.

What, however, we do know about Sir William Armstrong's invention is briefly this.—It is an invaluable addition to our engines of warfare, but it is simply a thing to be added to—not to supplant—those already in use. The Armstrong gun combines extraordinary lightness with immense length of range and great accuracy of aim. It is loaded at the breach instead of at the muzzle. It can be used for shell or for shot equally well; and the ball which Sir W. Armstrong has invented is so regulated that (as has been proved by experiment) it will act first as a cannon-ball and afterwards as a most destructive shell. It will pass through a ship's side without exploding, and will burst when it gets among the crew, instead of flying at once into fragments as soon as it touches the timbers of the vessel. The lightness of this gun strikes one as a very remarkable feature in it, and is such that we may at once reduce the weight of our naval guns by nearly three fourths without impairing the length of their range or the accuracy of their aim. This, as well as the breech-loading capabilities of the new guns, will render it possible to work them with fewer men and with less risk. The Armstrong shells, made of cast-iron coated with lead, are shaped like the new minie rifle-bullet, and are three diameters in length. Such shells can, of course, be fired through a gun much more slender than those used for round

charges, and consequently the gun itself can be thrust through a smaller port-hole, and offers a less conspicuous mark to the enemy.

It has been lately a topic of much discussion how far Sir William Armstrong can lay a legitimate claim to the invention of the gun which bears his name. A great deal has been said and written to prove that he has been forestalled by others—that as early as 1741 a certain Mr. Gilbert Hadley obtained a patent for a breech-loading cannon, and that other features of the new gun were found out by different mechanical geniuses at different periods between the date just mentioned and the present moment.

Now in all this there is, in reality, nothing that detracts from the credit due to Sir William Armstrong. Are there any instances, in the annals of mechanics, of any invention which has not been led up to by other men? In the ordinary history of such matters the inventor merely moves on a *step*. He adds something of his to what others have discovered before him. He takes their work, thinks over it, comes to it with a fresh eye, detects the weak parts and the imperfections of what is under his consideration, corrects these things and adds some point distinguishingly his own. Or he finds other men labouring through a whole life-time to make some half-discovered truth of practical service. They are unable to do so, and their discovery is consequently useless. Once made practicable it is—what it was not before—an invention, and he who has made it so is—in the opinion of one who knows what practical difficulties are—rightly endowed with the credit of the discovery.

VI.

HIS EVIDENCE ON MATTERS CONNECTED WITH SKATING; IN THE COURSE OF WHICH IS INTRODUCED A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF TUMBLING.

ONCE every year the earth suffers from a seizure of a violent and savage nature, which brings hidden benefits with it, but administers them with a rough hand, as a man might fling a purse of gold at your head, hitting you a nasty knock while he conveyed at the same time certain advantages which would compensate you for the accompanying thump.

This attack—it is called a Frost—is sometimes but an affair of only a day or two with us, sometimes it lasts for weeks together, while sometimes it comes and goes and hangs about us like an intermittent fever. It is, however, always sudden in assault. A short warning of *unusual* fog and darkness is given, and lo! we wake one morning at five, while it is yet dark, we say, 'it has turned suddenly cold;' we hear the subsiding crack of the fuel of our long-extinguished fire as it sinks together; we stretch out a reluctant arm for our wadded dressing-gown and make use of it as a supplementary blanket; nay, we harpoon towards us the shooting-jacket from the chair by the bed-side, and bivouac under that also; and in spite of all, and after all, we find that 'we can't get to sleep again for the cold.'

The symptoms develop now rapidly; the London boys outside give tongue, and though thinly clad, shout to each other in congratulation on this opportunity of effecting much slide-mischief on the pavement; the New Road is dotted with fallen horses; the cabs move at a foot-pace; the water is hard to come at; the pipes are frozen and roar all day, meaning to burst when the thaw comes; the wet towels on the horse by the window become stiff with ice; and a variety of other inconveniences occur which cause the human race generally to be slow in rising from bed; to be prone to good living; to be grimy about the knuckles; to be apt to graze the same against the angles of furniture; to feel sore

in the eyes, and torpid towards evening; and to make the best possible excuse for a second glass of punch before retiring for the night. In short it is undeniable that of the four elements the air has got the best of it now. It has locked the earth and the water up tight, and even the fire cannot hold its own, and affects a very small circle just round about it and no more.

It is not long before rumours go forth that the Serpentine —or, as some will have it, the Circontime—'will bear,' and away rushes the populace to disport itself upon the broad expanse of its waters, or to stand in safety on the shore scoffing at the misfortunes of its more venturesome members. Away rushes the populace, and after them, away rushes the Eye-witness to take note with all his eyes of everything that is going on, and of the predominant characteristics of the scene.

Peppermint and oranges are the predominant characteristics, there is not a shadow of a doubt about it; hot, fiery, appetite-destroying peppermint, and cold, pale grief-engendering oranges. It is impossible to stir five paces without coming in contact with a tray full of peppermint drops, or a basket lined with blue paper to set off its cargo of oranges. There is evidently a reaction of the stomach contemplated in this provision. The orange, which is hideously unripe and cold, produces such internal anguish that the consumer of it rushes off for peppermint to allay his torment, while the heated diaphragm of the peppermint-eater calls loudly within him for the ever-near orange. Nay, in some cases there are to be found humane men who sell the bane and the antidote together, having a division in their baskets with oranges on one side and peppermint drops on the other.

These two articles of consumption having it all their own way, it follows that the vendor of three-cornered tarts, with a dab of jam couchant in a field of paste, must come off second best, while the purveyor of gingerbread, roasted chestnuts, oily Brazil ditto, and even of hot elder-wine, are left nowhere in the race. Not so the merchants of walking-

sticks, there is a brisk demand for them, a walking-stick being much affected by your inexperienced skater; indeed, such a supplementary prop is a serviceable thing, and whether planted on the ice to support the beginner—in which case it always slips away from him—or flourished wildly in the air to the detriment of the eyes of other skaters, it is a graceful and convenient appendage.

The man who has brought what looks like an engine of torture, but which is really an instrument for ascertaining the height, weight, and strength of those who may be anxious for information on those subjects, has made a sad mistake. what could he hope for but the neglect with which he is treated? Did he think that skaters who had measured their length on the ice would come and test the truth of their estimate afterwards, or that persons of corpulent proportions would wish to ascertain whether they were too heavy to venture on the ice?

Among the component members of the crowd upon the banks two great classes are to be found—the people who suffer from the cold and the people who enjoy the cold. These last might sometmes surely be less defiantly hardy with great advantage to themselves and others. It is most aggravating to see old Bellows, for instance, always stamping about and thumping his chest with the perpetual old phrase about the bracing nature of the air. We have no objection to his being braced, far from it, but there is no occasion for him to make such a fuss about it, as if it was a very creditable thing on his part, and as if nobody was braced but himself. Let him be braced quietly and modestly, and let poor little Wriggles—who is home on sick leave from India, and is shivering his soul out—decline to be braced if he likes.

The single member of the rifle corps, who walks up and down with a lady on his arm, dressed in uniform, and with a red cock's plume in his cap, is sufficiently punished by his own feelings and by the sneer of passers-by, and may be left without further censure or comment. But the young man who has brought ladies with him to see him skate, and who

while his skates are being put on becomes paler and paler with every added strap—this young man, who when at last fully equipped and launched forth upon the world of ice, instantly falls down with a sickly giggle, as if he enjoyed the joke—this personage, we say, is of some importance, because he at once leads us to that analysis of falls, that great dissection of the art of tumbling, which the world has hitherto so strongly felt the want of.

The poet Shakspeare, when he puts into the mouth of Touchstone that celebrated dissertation on the different degrees of removal in a quarrel, is able, it will be remembered to dispose of his subject under seven heads. It is not so with the degrees of tumbling. The writer finds that this voluminous and most important topic can be done justice to in no fewer than eight divisions. A greater degree of condensation—a more merged classification—has been attempted, but the result was found to be imperfect; and the reader may depend upon the subjoined analysis as being reduced to the narrowest limits compatible with a complete examination of the subject.

There are, to deal with this matter after the Touchstone manner, eight degrees, or modes of tumbling—no more, and no less. There is first, the *fling utter*; secondly, the *smash complicated*; thirdly, the *stagger victorious*; fourthly, the *scramble ineffectual*; fifthly, the *drop sudden*; sixthly, the *fall facetious*; seventhly, the *tumble truculent*; and eighthly, and lastly, the *crash unresisted*.

Here are the whole eight orders of tumbling—an awful list. Let us now examine each, and go into this fearful subject a little more in detail, beginning *at* the beginning with the fling utter. He who having attained the highest possible degree of speed known in the annals of skating strikes suddenly against some particle of foreign matter which has become imbedded in the ice—be it a stone, a frozen twig, or what not—he who when thus checked finds his feet cast up into the air, and presently his body in such violent contact with the ice that he slides along upon his

shoulder and his ear fifteen yards before his legs have descended to the same level with the portions of his anatomy just hinted at—this man, and he alone, knows what it is to have experienced the fling utter. It is a condition of tumbling wholly dependent upon and inseparable from, a great degree of speed, and is intimately associated with that phenomenon known to skaters as 'the outside edge.' The fling utter is a piteous accident. It is frequent and terrible, and is attended by the following symptoms—a smart tingling in the ears, a sensation as of a rush of blood to the back of the head, a vision before the eyes of numerous black tadpoles ornamented with diamond frontlets or coronets, and floating in the air, a sudden taste of base metal in the mouth, a conviction on the part of the sufferer, that his neck has become shorter, that his vertebræ are jammed together, that his heart is between his teeth, his legs in his body, his body up in his head, his stomach collapsed, his hands affixed to his ankles, and his feet joined on to his wrists. Enough of the fling utter; it is a fearful subject. Let us go on to the smash complicated.

This is an accident strangely connected with peculiar states of the nervous system. You see a man swooping down upon you, you have time to avoid him, but you can't; a hideous fascination draws you on, you meet with a dread concussion, you embrace him and cling to him, and he to you, your hat drops off, so does his, you perform together a frenzied waltz, which brings you to a slide, you are falling, remember, all this time, the sliders descend upon you, and you form the centre of an entangled mass of arms, legs, and bodies, in which no person can identify his own limbs till the great crash is over; the sufferer crawls out of this seething mass of humanity on his hands and knees, and very commonly finds a recess or dimple in his hat, which brings the career of that article of costume to an untimely end. This is a brief history of the smash complicated, so calle from the number of persons involved in it, and the manner in which all the victims of the accident become mixed up together in one common ruin.

We now come to the stagger victorious, and the scramble ineffectual. It has doubtless been the lot of most persons who have looked on at the sport of skating, to have their attention drawn to the conduct of some individual engaged in that pastime, who suddenly and for some unexplained reason flings his head and body back, stamps seven times with the heels of his skates, whirls his arms around, casts his stick into a distant parish, plunges forward, swerves, advances several hurried paces, stamps more wildly than before, revolves, clutches at the air, bows himself double, again flings himself back, recovers himself and his balance without any actual fall, and stands perfectly still for several minutes with his hands supporting the small of his back. This is the stagger victorious, concerning which it may be said in one word that it is a mistake, and that it is better to tumble down at once than to rack the back, strain the abdomen, and dislocate the limbs generally by the manœuvres just described. But if the stagger victorious is a mistake, what is the scramble ineffectual, a performance in which our acrobat goes through the whole of the above-mentioned extravagancies, and tumbles down after all? This is the most disappointing and the most humiliating of all modes of falling; the unhappy victim of the scramble ineffectual, having secured the attention of everybody present by the prolonged struggle which precedes his defeat.

Perhaps, however, the most undignified of all tumbles is that which has been characterised as the drop sudden. It is a very simple transaction, and is commonly unattended with serious results. It consists, to put the affair in two words, of a sudden (and involuntary) sitting-down act on the part of the sufferer, who drops without any apparent cause upon the ice in a sitting posture, with his legs stretched out straight in front of him. It has been remarked, by great observers and profound thinkers, that the patient in this case will ordinarily remain in this position for some minutes before attempting to rise, that he is apt to look about him, and that after picking up his hat, which the drop sudden invariably

jerks off, he will take a handkerchief therefrom, and carefully blow his nose whilst still in the sitting posture. From these observations the profound thinkers aforesaid have drawn the conclusion, that the drop sudden is a less alarming seizure than any other to which skaters are liable.

Let us speak of the fall facetious. The fall facetious is in its earlier stages intimately mixed up with the scramble ineffectual. It is generally preceded by the same resistance and staggering, and even the fall itself has no distinguished character of its own. It is in this case a question of the tumbler, and not of the tumble. He who treats his fall in the facetious manner will (with anguish in every limb) get up with a smiling countenance joining the laugh against himself, and even sometimes muttering in a gay manner disparaging remarks about his own clumsiness, or faintly humming a lively air. Let no person be taken in by this. Instances have been known in which sufferers by the fall facetious have skated for three minutes and a half after their accident, just as if nothing had happened, have then cast a hurried look around the swept circle in which they have been performing, and coming to the conclusion that nobody was looking, have limped off to some secret island, and have been found there hours afterwards, sitting among water-fowl and groaning with anguish.

The fall facetious, though a less candid, is a more amiable view of our subject than that exhibited in the tumble truculent. The tumbler truculent is a man of a somewhat savage, but a sincere and open character, who when he is in a rage, and in considerable bodily discomfort, is at no pains to conceal the fact. It is his habit, as is the case with most dangerous characters, to dine early, and he has come out to skate immediately after his meal. Under these circumstances the shock of a severe fall is no doubt anything but conducive to digestion; yet is this no efficient defence of the fury with which the tumbler truculent turns upon the small boy upon the bank and asks him 'what the devil he is laughing at?' It must not be forgotten that (at least as far as the

present writer's knowledge extends) the tumble truculent has not arisen from any fault on the skater's part; he has either been tripped up, or has stumbled over some defect in the ice, and the tripper up or the ice itself, as the case may be, will at such times come in for certain remarks which are the reverse of complimentary. It is a fatal error to display emotion on the ice, and a man will meet with no sympathy who resents his fall as a deadly injury.

We have now got in our examination of this great subject to the eighth and last division of falls, and the 'crash unresisted' remains alone for consideration. Perhaps of all the orders of tumbling which we have gone into, there is none so opposed to this last upon the list as the scramble ineffectual. Just as the skater in that instance declined to accept his doom, so in the case of the crash unresisted, he takes the accident as it comes, makes no resistance, and only devotes the half-instant between the flying of his legs into the air, and the descent of his body upon the ice, to a rapid act of self-preservation in so ordering his fall that the fleshiest portions of his frame, and not the more bony angles, shall sustain the full force of the impending crash. This is the most perfect wisdom conceivable; and in carrying it out he will find the advice of Sancho Panza, on the best means of enduring a blanket-tossing, of incalculable service. 'If such mishaps do come,' he says, 'there is nothing to be done but to shrug up one's shoulders, hold one's breath, shut one's eyes, and let one's self go whither fortune and the blanket please to toss one.'

With this invaluable piece of advice the Eye-witness thinks he may bring the more analytical part of his subject to a close, introducing only a few concluding remarks on tumbles generally, which are required to complete the usefulness of his treatise. The writer having studied the art of skating for nearly twenty years, and having always aimed at its higher achievements, has perhaps had as many falls as most men, and is consequently in a condition to speak about this matter as authoritatively as another. He would suggest then, for

the consideration of psychologists, a theory about which he has little doubt himself, though it certainly sounds a little startling at first. He holds that tumbling is infinitely more a thing of the mind than of the body. The writer has observed that after a hard day's work he will be apt to fall oftener than after a day of less mental exertion; and he has also noticed that one fall (if it hurts) begets another, and that at such times the injured part of the frame is exactly that portion which comes in for damage again, which has entirely resulted from a sensation in the mind of horror at the thought of another blow on the tender place. But perhaps the strongest support of all to this theory of the mental or cerebral origin of tumbles is to be found in the fact, that any attempt on the part of a skater to *show off* is invariably attended with a series of disasters calculated to wound the feelings, both mental and bodily, of the exhibitor, in no ordinary degree.

Let us illustrate this with an instance. No sooner have those two young ladies with the groseille rosettes outside their bonnets, with cheeks which the frost have nipped into the loveliest pinkness conceivable, and escorted by convenient brothers just home for the holidays—no sooner have these young persons approached the ring of ice on which our skater is engaged, than the troubles of that unhappy man begin. He ceases to complete his strokes, he passes from one to the other too rapidly in his anxiety to achieve *tour de force* beyond his reach; he rushes upon an outside edge with more impetus than he can deal with safely, and the fling utter is the consequence. He is skating *at* these two young ladies; his wandering eye is for ever covertly watching the effect of his performance, when it ought to be helping him to steer clear of impending dangers; his nerves are unstrung; he says to himself, 'Good heavens, what a failure it would be if I was to get a fall now!' and instantly down he goes.

One more instance in support of this theory. It is well known that all success in this world has the effect of sur-

rounding him who has been able to attain it, with a band of admiring and watchful parasites. Now successful skating is more indicative of strength of limb than of force of mind, and a man may be a dexterous skater, and yet have a weak head. There is nothing more common than such a combination, and he who is thus constituted, completely upset by his own triumphs, and in a manner carried away by his own legs, will frequently lose himself so far as to hold forth to the admirers and satellites, who invariably surround him, upon the subject of skating, and even to illustrate his meaning at times by an attempt to show the neophyte whom he is instructing, the stroke, or combination of strokes, which it is his province to describe. Woe to such men! Woe to him who says 'If you'll allow me, I will show you what I mean.' If that man fails to dislocate a limb in the tumble which ensues, he may think himself well out of it.

Enough has now been said to prove to demonstration the frequent mental origin of disasters on the ice; and with this last fall we will let the subject fall also, and get on to other things.

Get on to the bridge over the Serpentine, and observe how colour in this vast assembly of people, goes for nothing, and how the eye is struck by nothing but black and greyish white, the crowd entirely showing as patches, larger or smaller, of black, and the greyish white of the ice or the frosty earth being their background.

Get on to the other bank, and shudder as you read the board which limits the hours for bathing in the Serpentine. Bathing in the Serpentine before daylight, and with only that small pool to bathe in which is kept for the ducks.

Get on to a consideration of the ducks themselves—the frozen-out ducks who don't know what to think of it at all, who make short excursions on the ice, and finding it a failure return to their small domain where the ice is broken for them, and turn themselves upside down for inexplicable reasons in the water as if they didn't mind the cold.

Get on to where the small capitalist, whose stock in trade

consists of a rough deal box turned bottom upwards, and with a string attached to it, is giving ha'penny rides upon the ice to abject boys who call this vehicle a sledge, and shout and yell for joy as they sit astride it.

And having got through all these matters, and having arrived safely at the end of the Serpentine from which we originally started, we may stand there for half a minute and ponder over one or two questions connected with ice and skating before we run shuddering home to a furious fire and the best dinner that circumstance accords us.

What becomes of icemen and skate-lenders in summer? In summer—quotha? what becomes of them during eleven months of the year? These strange and fearful-looking men, who work the machinery of the Royal Humane Society, these men with inflated air-cushions on their stomachs, and hopeless-looking cork life-preservers over their shoulders—what becomes of them when the Serpentine is not frozen over? Look again at these mysterious throngs and armaments of skate-proprietors, men who pass a shuddering and frost-bitten existence, intimately allied with gimlets impaired at the point, and brad-awls of doubful sharpness—what becomes of these men and of their rows of sorry skates for hire, when no ice is to be found except at the fishmonger's and the pastrycook's? This race is a race apart. They are not like other men. They are never tall, never fat, never thin. What becomes of these men, your Eye-witness asks, during the summer months and 'in the season of the year?' What becomes of them and of their stock, their sorry skates, their impaired gimlets, their pointless brad-awls, their strips of bed-side carpet, and their wheezy chairs? Hech, sirs, but these are awful questions! To look at these men they are like bill-stickers. But can they belong to that valuable fraternity? Hardly—for if so who would stick the bills on our walls, while these mysterious personages are sticking the skates on our feet? Are they members of some league or guild which supports them through the year? Are they and the ice-men, bound up as they are by common interest, allied

in such a society, and do they spend their summer together, the skate-proprietors fixing the sorry skates on the feet of the ice-men, taking them off again immediately, and then tumbling through trap-doors provided for the purpose, and being straightway hooked up again with the apparatus of the Humane Society, for practice? It may be so. But at all events the writer repeats that these are very awful questions.

The season for skating is so short and uncertain in this country that little or no legislative attention has been bestowed upon the best means of regulating the conditions under which that pastime may be most safely practised. Short, however, as the season is, the accidents which annually occur are serious enough and frequent enough to justify the bestowal of some degree of attention upon this subject. In the first place (to take the most important class of accidents, those, namely, which effect life), is there any reason why our ornamental waters should have a greater depth than two or three feet? If, as their name implies, these artificial lakes are simply intended for ornament, that purpose would be answered by two feet of water as well as by a hundred. The difficulty, if there is any, with regard to the fish, is unworthy to be put in the balance for a moment; if they cannot live in the shallow water, they may go. There is indeed but one doubt that can affect this question, and that is, whether a great depth of water is necessary to prevent stagnation. On this the present writer is unable to give an opinion; but the subject is well worthy of the attention of those who may be acquainted with such matters, being one by which, beyond the shadow of a doubt, human life is annually affected.

A *miss* is not as good as a mile in all cases, and when the point of a walking-stick has been within a quarter of an inch of your eye, you are not (as to the nerves) as well off as if it had never attained such proximity to the organ in question. The wild flourishing of sticks by skaters in their attempts to preserve a balance must have struck—in more senses of the word than one—everybody who has spent much time on the ice, as one of the most annoying and aggravating dangers

they have had to encounter. A disaster produced by this practice of carrying sticks, so prevalent among bad skaters, occurred in the year 1859, and, fresh as it is in everybody's memory, will bear out what has been put forward here better than any longer argument on the subject. It is enough to say that the thing is excessively dangerous, that *sticks are of no use to skaters whatsoever*, and that they should not be allowed in the hands of any one engaged in skating.

These two are the main questions in connexion with this topic which really seem, as affecting life and limb, to call for some serious attention. It would be a curious thing to examine the books of our hospitals and of the Royal Humane Society, with a view to ascertain how many of the accidents which one frost has brought about, might have been prevented by a more serious recognition of the great importance of that annual visitation.

VII.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE FEELINGS OF ONE WHO SUDDENLY FINDS HIMSELF IMMERSED IN DEEP WATERS, TOGETHER WITH THE METHOD ADOPTED BY A CERTAIN MERCIFUL SOCIETY FOR HIS RESTORATION.

It was the endeavour of your Eye-witness, in his last report, to call the attention of those whom it might concern, to a consideration of what steps might be taken to diminish the number of accidents, and injuries to life and limb, which the setting in of a Frost usually brings about. It was his hint to speak of the bad results which attend the carrying of walking-sticks by skaters, and of the loss of life which the depth of our ornamental waters annually costs. It may be that in dwelling so strongly on the second of these considerations—the apparently unnecessary depth of the lakes in our different parks—the E. W. was partly influenced by the recollection of an experience of his own, passed through many years ago, and which has left an impression as vivid now as it was fourteen years since, and as it will be, if the

writer lives, fourteen years hence. It may be that a narrative of all that the E. W. remembers of a break through the ice, an immersion in ten feet of water, a rescue by the ice-men belonging to the Royal Humane Society, and an account of the course of treatment which the sufferer by an ice accident goes through at the Receiving House in Hyde Park—it may be that such a history shall serve to increase the force of what was urged last week, as well as to draw increased attention to the merits of that admirable Society, to whose agency the Eye-witness owns it that he *is* an Eye-witness at all, and through whose instrumentality it happens that the hand which writes these lines is at this moment other than a little heap of crumbling bones and dust.

A child blowing at an extinguished torch, with the motto 'Lateat scintillata forsan'—some little spark may be hidden here yet—is the device of the Royal Humane Society; and indeed the spark must be a faint one indeed, if the treatment adopted by the servants and officers of this excellent establishment fails to fan it into a flame. The accredited instances of the resuscitation of those apparently dead are most extraordinary, and seem to show that, till such actual signs of dissolution as stiffness of the limbs, and other unmistakeable symptoms are developed, a hopeful use of the different means of restoring animation should not be given up.

Cases are even on record of a restoration of life after its total suspension for *five hours;* and it is difficult to conceive of a more intense gratification than those must experience who, after hours of labour, see at last some hint of life appearing in their patient. As they observe the first convulsive catchings of the chest muscles, the first feeble gasp for breath, the first faint sob or sigh which follows; as they note the slight relaxing of the jaws, the weak flutter of the heart and pulse,—the excitement must be extreme, and the anxiety lest the hold they have obtained on the hardly-recovered life should loosen. There is danger even when, with the restoration of the circulation, the senses return.

Sometlmes the patient will screech out in alarm as consciousness revives; at other times convulsions take place and suddenly destroy him.

With all the means of restoring suspended life—warm baths, hot beds, and even the apparatus used for artificial inflation of the lungs, the Receiving House in Hyde Park is well supplied. It is open to the public, and any person interested in such things may examine all their machinery whenever he chooses.

A short account of the rise and progress of the Royal Humane Society (extracted from their own Report) may not be uninteresting here, if only to show the reluctance with which schemes of so much practical utility are received by our native country, even at their first commencement:—

'The Art of Resuscitating the Apparently Dead does not appear to have been known to the ancients.

'Some instances of recovery from Drowning and Hanging, mentioned in the notes to 'Derham's Physico-Theology,' are the first on record. These cases happened at Tronningholm and at Oxford, about the year 1650; and the means used for the recovery of the persons in question were similar to those recommended by The Royal Humane Society. It does not seem, however, that these instances excited any public interest, or that any serious investigation of the subject of Suspended Animation took place till about the middle of the last century. At this period the penetrating genius of Dr. J. Fothergill, which had already, in other branches of his profession, developed new and important modes of treating disease, led him to perceive "the fallacy and dubiousness of the received criteria of dissolution;" and in a paper which he addressed to the *Royal Society*, he maintained, as the result of his inquiries, "*the possibility of saving many lives without risking anything.*" To us it must appear extraordinary that this publication excited little interest and attention among the medical philosophers of his time. He had, however, propounded a most important theory, although the glory of putting it to the test of experiment was reserved for a later period. This was first attempted by M. Reaumer, an ingenious foreigner: that gentleman having succeeded in several attempts at resuscitation in Switzerland in the year 1767, transmitted reports of his cases to the Academy of Sciences at Paris. Soon after this period, in the same year, a Society for the Recovery of the Apparently Drowned was instituted at Amsterdam, and, as if by a simultaneous movement, several similar associations were formed in different parts of Europe. The Memoirs of the Dutch Society were translated into English, in 1773, by Dr. Cogan, for the purpose of convincing the people *of this country* of the practicability of resuscitating the apparently

drowned. His work fell into the hands of the late DR. HAWES (M.D.), to whose ardent and indefatigable mind it opened a career of public usefulness, which he pursued until his death. Finding that a strong and general prejudice existed against the *practicability* of Resuscitation, and that the idea was even ridiculed as hopeless and chimerical, he determined to *demonstrate* it. With this view he publicly offered rewards to persons who, between London and Westminster Bridges, should, within a certain period from the occurrence of an accident, rescue the bodies of drowned persons and bring them to places appointed on shore for their reception, in order that the means of resuscitation might be tried. At these places he and his friends restored several lives. During a whole year DR. HAWES continued to pay these rewards himself. At the end of this period DR. COGAN represented to him the injury his private fortune must sustain by such continued expenses, and kindly offered to unite with him for the formation of the HUMANE SOCIETY, which at first consisted of thirty-two individuals, their respective private friends. Until the end of DR. HAWES's life the Institution continued to receive his unremitting attention and vigilant care. To the persevering exertions of this gentleman, and especially to his disinterested early efforts, the English nation is indebted for the formation of a Society which, whether we reflect on its purposes or success, does honour to our country, and exhibits most impressively the power of a single mind to accomplish objects of the most benign character and extensive utility.'

The writer will now give his own experience of the efficiency of the Royal Humane Society. For the greater convenience of narration, he will ask leave to tell his story in the first person.

It was fourteen or fifteen years ago at least, and I was then an eager skater. Fonder of it even than I am now; swifter to seek the ice, more slow to leave it; a student of the higher walks (or rather strokes) of the art of skating; a diligent cultivator of that mystery which is at the root of all adornment in this exercise, the mystic 'outside edge.'

The Round Pond was crowded to inconvenience. The Round Pond is, as most persons know, just in front of Kensington Palace; and it is rumoured that it was once a gravel-pit, and that in consequence, as may be conceived, its waters are in some parts of very great depth. The number of skaters on this piece of water, on the day with which we are concerned, was *so great that* there was scarcely any pos-

sibility of carrying out a single stroke to completeness. So constant were the collisions between the skaters, and so completely was one's attention absorbed by the necessity of steering clear of other people, that it was hardly possible to enjoy the amusement at all, and I was on the point of giving the thing up and taking off my skates, when it occurred to me that there was one part of the pond, on the side exactly opposite to where I was performing, which I had not tried, and which seemed from a distance to be less covered with skaters than the other portions of the ice.

Distance is a thing very soon disposed of in skating; and an approach to this more deserted region was the affair of a very few moments. Yes—as I drew nearer I found that my first impression was not an incorrect one—there *were* fewer people here. Fewer people on all parts of this side of the pond; and just out there where that pole inscribed 'Dangerous' had tumbled over on its side—there was no one at all.

What fools the people must be—are they afraid? Why the frost has lasted a fortnight, and any one with eyes in his head would see that that 'dangerous' pole has been left there, simply because the proper authorities have forgotten to take it away.

Arrested and baulked at every stroke as I had been all the morning, the sight of this clear place where I could practise unmolested was inconceivably attractive. I was very young, not more than sixteen or seventeen years had passed over my head; the days of taming had not begun—the building up of the spirit was in full progress, the taming down had not commenced; there was good ice in front, and nobody to knock up against me; and behind was bad ice and a crowd of skaters. Pooh! hang the danger—besides, there isn't any danger, that board has been there ever since the frost set in. Most people who have had anything to do with ice will be aware that that substance is subject to several different kinds of cracks. There is the melodious ringing *wholesome crack*, which ice of any strength is liable to, and

which is not indicative of danger; there is the sharp rattling crack of thin ice, which certainly does show mischief at hand, but which is not perfectly inconsistent with security; and lastly, there is a crack which he who hears will know by instinct to be a cry of warning, but one uttered generally just too late.

I had not philosophised much on cracks, or indeed on anything else at the time I am writing about. I had my skates on, I saw before me a sheet of ice, and I knew that the frost which was making my fingers tingle dated from a fortnight back. What ice too! black and smooth and fresh. A few more strokes and what a sweep I shall have over its polished surface! a few more—Hark! is that man with the life-belt on calling out to me? Yes—what's that?

A crack such as I had never heard before, and which sent the knowledge—not the apprehension, mind, but the certainty—into my soul that I was going through the ice. There was not a clear second of time between that crack and the time when the ice gave way beneath me, and I was in the water. The cold, cold water—the cruel treacherous ice that broke away as I held to it with my hands, that gave with every touch, and doing so made the space which I had broken away so large that water was all around me except just in one spot to which I held, but held gently, seeing the thinness of the edge against which my breast was pressing, and knowing that if I moved this last fragment might go too, and that then I must inevitably sink, I knew not how far; there was no ground beneath my feet, I knew that.

How difficult too, to keep still, the excessive cold of the water making my chest heave convulsively and causing me to gasp for breath! How difficult to keep still with the wicked water sucking at me, and pulling and drawing me under, till at last I felt the *toes of my skates scraping the inside of the ice!*

By this time the words that announce a disaster on the ice were ringing through the air, and the cry of 'man in' reached me from many voices. I hardly expect that it will be believed, but I have a sort of impression that in the hour of extreme

danger, and with death apparently at hand, it was a sort of gratification to me to hear that cry, and—I was not seventeen remember—to be called 'a 'man.' I had so often writhed under the insult of being called a 'boy' by my elders, that this cry of 'man in,' as applied to myself was, in a dim and half-unconscious way, a sort of pleasure and compliment to me. I knew that I was the subject of that horrid invocation; and as I lay in the water, with my arms stretched out over the piece of ice on which my life depended, I watched the preparations which were going on for my rescue with an eagerness which none can know of but those who have been in some such a position themselves. There was no one near me. The machinery of the Royal Humane Society was all far removed from this place. I was skating alone when I dropped through and had no friend upon the ice.

Still that lifting and sucking action of the water beneath me—pulling and drawing at me still. The man with the life-belt, with the long ice-ladder on wheels, with the air-barrels at one end of it and a drag fastened to the side, is hastening towards me from the other side of the pond—can I hold on till he comes? I hardly know. The cold seems arresting my very life within me—am I going to die? My young life—is it at an end already? Oh, God! why did I ever do anything wrong? And Mrs. James's ball to-night—and *she* was to be there—I shall not go. The man with the ice-ladder on wheels has broken in at fifty yards' distance, and cannot get any nearer to me; the ice is rotten all around, who can come near to help me? A circle far, far off of frightened people gazing at me—I cannot see their faces—they are making signs to me but I cannot understand—they are calling out to me but I cannot hear. And what would they say at home if they could see me now? Would the ice-men try harder to save me if I had a brother there among the crowd to urge them on? A brother—this piece of ice is giving way—the water, which is sucking at me more and more, has got into my clothes—I am lower down than I was, and the *ice to* which I cling is surely sinking—the man who was

coming to save me is still in the hole which he made, and others are trying now to get *him* out. Every one of those Latin exercises done with the help of a key—and praises lavished on me for them—I lied, and said I had no help—and I shall die—and the crowd—and that snow-figure which the boys have built up is like the clown I saw last night in the pantomime—and the water now is creeping over this piece of ice and my arms are wet—and the ice will be under soon—and the men with the strange machinery—they are standing aloof and cannot get to me—and some are running round the bank and they have ropes—and one has got a *drag*—but I am sinking now, my hair is wet—and the water pouring down my collar—and when we were at Naples, my father asked me to go out with him one day and to stay with him while he sketched—and a dog would have gone—but I had some plan of my own and would not go—and he sighed—he sighed—and I shall die—the men with the ropes upon the bank, and with a ladder—it is tied to the ropes—it is pushed along the ice towards me—a man is crawling along the ladder —but too late, for surely this is death—the voices on the bank—what do they say? The man is not far off—he crawls —so slowly—too late! I cannot hold—I cannot see—or hear—or feel—and I shall—die—

Not yet. Saved—to write these words some fifteen years afterwards, and to pause from time to time as I do so, and think how those years have passed. Saved—to remember this rescue for an hour after it happened, and then to go back into the world forgetting it. Saved—to pass through other dangers and to escape other perils, but never, perhaps, to be at such close quarters with death, or so completely to hold my life in my hand, as at this time that now I write of.

I have no distinct recollection—I never had any—of how I was got out of the water. I remember something of crouching beside the man on the ladder, a huddled mass of ice and freezing water, the ladder being swiftly drawn ashore by the ropes which were fastened to it, and breaking in once

twice in its progress over the surface of the ice. I remember the horror of each of these new accidents. I remember running as fast as I could, supported on each side by an iceman, from the Round Pond, to the Receiving House of the Royal Humane Society. I remember that some one had been sent on to order the warm bath which I found ready on my arrival. I remember how difficult it was to get my wet clothes off. I remember rejoicing that my stockings were not the pair which were darned so much at the knee, and which would have been discreditable, and I recollect seeing the water poured out of my watch—it was a silver one, but a good performer—on the ground, and then I remember feeling very happy while the superintendent of the place, a man of some forty years of age, with a kind face, and great bushy whiskers kept throwing the warm water over my chest with his hands as I lay in the bath, and thought how warm it felt, and how strange it was that water should be the first thing wanted to repair the mischief which water had done.

Is misfortune good for us, that it makes us feel so happy afterwards? I shall not forget the peace of that time. I shall not forget how looking up at the face of this man as he sat beside the bath, I thought I had never seen any one who looked so good and so benevolent. He was a man who had the appearance of a sea-captain, and was just the sort of person one would wish to have by one in a storm, or indeed in any sort of danger. I do not know whether he is still in the same position, but I am sure that no one could be found more suited for the post, or who looked a fitter representative of a Humane Society.

The Receiving House in Hyde Park is not in its interior arrangements unlike a ward in a hospital. Clean and warm, and airy; it is provided with the means of having several warm baths at once, and of putting in practice all the directions which are given in the Society's book, for the restoration of those in whom life is suspended.

As soon as I had been long enough in the warm bath, I *was taken out* and put into a bed heated from beneath, by a

hot water apparatus between two warm blankets, but without sheets. The next remedy applied was a glass of scalding brandy and water of considerable strength, after drinking which I lay down and thought I had never been so warm or so comfortable in my life. I remained there all the afternoon in a kind of half-dreamy state, watching the attendants as they moved about the room, putting to rights the things which had been deranged on my account; and listening to the sound of the turning over of leaves, which came from an adjoining room where the superintendent was sitting waiting till he might be wanted again, and reading to beguile the time, a book of shipwrecks. Meanwhile a messenger had been sent to my house for my clothes. Now mark an instance of thoughtfulness in this: the messenger chosen was a woman, lest if one of the men in his remarkable costume had gone, he might alarm those to whom he was sent in an unnecessary degree. By the time the dry clothes had arrived, I was just waking up from a pleasant doze. I was soon up and dressed, and safe at home by the fire-side before the lamps were lit. I took no harm by this accident whatever, but rather good; for whereas when I fell into the water I was suffering from a bad cold, on the next morning after my treatment by the Humane Society, I was perfectly recovered from that complaint.

It happened but a few days after the above words were written, that your Eye-witness was passing in his solitary walk along the north bank of the Serpentine, just as the short daylight of December was coming to an end. It was a damp and melancholy evening, and this piece of water which was described in the last report as the scene of so much life and excitement was utterly deserted, except by one lonely and overgrown blue-coat boy, who stood on the bank testing the strength of what remained of the ice with one of his long yellow legs, and holding on the while by a post, which supported one of those exhortations to protect the water-fowl which meet the public eye so often in our parks. The

E. W. had been thinking, as he walked along and saw a couple of these same water-fowls careering over his head, in a flight surely more rapid than that of other birds, that with such powers of diving, swimming, and flying combined, these animals had a very good notion of protecting themselves. It may be remarked by-the-by in passing, that these creatures seem to have altogether an enviable life of it. Well-fed, able to enjoy the privilege of bird, beast, and fish at once, and with nothing to do, their lot seems without drawback; and it is a curious refutation of the theory that happiness is equally divided to turn from a contemplation of the existence of these water-fowls, to that of a donkey upon Hampstead Heath, a tribe which is ever rewarded with more kicks than halfpence.

Occupied with these thoughts, the E. W. had walked on till he found himself opposite that Receiving House of the Royal Humane Society in which he had passed through the course of treatment which has been described above. It must be owned that this building is not a hilarious edifice, and that it is strangely and generally suggestive of a mausoleum in all its main contours. And yet a strong inclination came upon your Eye-witness, as he stood before the house, to revisit once more the room in which he had been humanely dealt with so many years ago. Crossing over the road, and cruising round to the back of the mausoleum, your Eye-witness came suddenly upon a semi-official looking man, who had the appearance of something between a river-steamer ticket-collector, and a diver out of work, and who was entangling himself with some very hookey drags at the back of the building, near to a suspicious shed which looked like a dead-house. Just Heaven! by what break-ladders, by what deadly implements, by what coils of rope, by what sledges of deliverance was this man not surrounded! The engines that rescue you from death—as surgeon's instruments, hospital appurtenances, life-boats, drags, and this ice-tackle—are as terrible to look on as the apparatus of death itself, the undertaker's hearse and the sexton's spade.

The man who had been coiling drag-ropes, upon being questioned by the E. W. as to when he could look over the inside of the mausoleum, suggested, to the great surprise of your Witness, that he could throw his eye over it now if he liked, and if he did not mind the faintness of the light. There was light enough for all that the Eye-witness wanted to see, and there was even something in the approach of twilight that made the notion of penetrating into this tomb—where men are saved from the tomb—additionally attractive. Your Eye-witness advanced to the front entrance, and the ex-iceman went round to the back to let him in.

The first sounds that reached the writer's ears as he entered the building, were sounds of music—of music, and of children's voices, singing some pure and touching melody. The superintendent lived there, the iceman said, in answer to that surprise which unexpressed in words must have shown itself in some look or gesture on the part of your Eye-witness when first these sounds, so little expected in this place, fell upon his ear. 'The superintendent lived there, and his family and the children were singing as they did most evenings.'

Well, there was the room, there was the bath, the bed, all smaller, of course, than the Eye-witness recollected them; but all in the same position as they were fifteen long years ago. There was the other room where the man had sat reading the book of shipwrecks. There were the printed directions for the recovery of the apparently drowned, hanging against the wall; and there the Society's device of the child blowing at the extinguished torch, and the motto round it 'Lateat scintillata forsan.'

It chanced that for some time your Eye-witness was left alone in this room; for having expressed a wish to possess a copy of the last printed report of the Royal Humane Society, the ex-iceman had to go round to the back of the premises to get it. He went out at the front door of the building, it closed behind him with a great crash, and the Eye-witness was left the only occupant of the place. The

children, in a part of the building shut off from the rest, were still singing to a simple air played on a piano; the darkness was gathering about the walls, and the Eye-witness sat down upon a chair by the side of the bed in which he had once passed a winter's afternoon, and gave way unresistingly to the thoughts that came crowding into his mind.

What anxious hearts had beaten in this place; what faces, pale with suspense, had gathered, perhaps, round this very bed, as some one linked to those who looked on, by ties of that blood which seemed to have stagnated in his veins, lay there with glazed eyes, and with the foam upon his lips, to all appearance dead. And the sufferer himself, his body resenting the revival going on within it, writhing and convulsed under the newly stirring life. The sufferer himself, with the machinery of his existence labouring hard in its efforts to recommence the functions which had stopped, it seemed just now, for ever.

And then, how soon forgotten! The life, the precious trust, given back to him again to be misused, perhaps, as soon as it was regained. The escape, how soon forgotten by him who sustained it, as well as by the friends who stood around!

How soon forgotten. How soon was that rescue experienced by him who writes these words, scattered out of his mind to give place to base and unworthy trifles! How soon is the Magdalen forgetful of her fall, and thoughtful once more about the tiring of her hair, and the fit of her dress! How soon is the widow attentive to her mourning, and anxious about the judicious crimping of her cap! 'To the grave with the dead, and the living to the bread,' is still the cry to-day as it was in the time of Cervantes.

And indeed it must be so. In the room in which the writer sat, as these thoughts pressed in upon his mind, there was as great a combination of the grave and the trifling as elsewhere. On the lid which covered the hot bath in which the dead-alive is placed, was laid a woman's half-finished dress *of a gay* and brilliant pattern; a perambulator was perched

upon one of the beds; and the children in the adjoining compartment of the house were singing now a comic negro melody.

The door opened again with a sounding crash; the ex-iceman returned with the report for which he had been sent; and the Eye-witness, passing out into the empty Park, looked once again over to where the elms grow tall about the pond at Kensington, and he thought of what had happened to him there as he walked homewards, and as the darkness of the longest night in the year dropped down upon the earth.

VIII.

HIS EVIDENCE CONCERNING THE PRACTICES WHICH WILL NOW AND THEN CHARACTERISE AN ENGLISH ELECTION, AND AS TO THE BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION WHICH (QUITE UNKNOWN TO THE CANDIDATES THEMSELVES) WILL OCCASIONALLY BE PRACTISED DURING THEIR CANVASS.

'HIM as gives most shall have my vote.' This was the ever-reiterated burden of the song sung by many mouths in the Shire Hall at Gloucester. This the chorus which rose in the court all day long. This the sordid screech which echoed to the very rafters of its roof.

For your Eye-witness was (of course) present at the Election Inquiry instituted by the Commission at Gloucester; that inquiry, of which the reader heard so much a short time since, and in the course of which so many strange and disheartening particulars were disclosed to the public.

The Eye-witness is sorry for Gloucester, and mourns over its corruptions very sincerely. Its inhabitants are, as far as he saw, a polite race though a venal, and the town itself is a fine old place, and has an old-fashioned comfortable look, very pleasant to those who still enjoy the sight of a stage-coach (the E. W. saw one with four horses), or an old post-chaise painted yellow.

Truly Gloucester is a wonderful and misleading city; a city which you walk about and examine carefully, and dispose of in your own mind as a combination of an ordinary agri-

cultural capital and a cathedral town, till you happen to see a man in complete maritime costume turning down an obscure lane which apparently ends in the county gaol. You follow this mariner, saying to yourself, 'and why a sou'-wester hat, why a blue flannel jersey, why those canvas trousers in Gloucester?'—Why? Follow the seaman but a little bit farther and you will see. You will see suddenly appearing, as in a dream, long ranges of warehouses with cranes attached, endless intricacies of dock, miles of tram-road, wildernesses of timber in stacks, and huge three-masted ships, wedged into little canals, floating through flood-gates with no apparent means of propulsion, and without a sail to bless themselves with. And it is this extraordinary inland port which you had disposed of so easily as a quiet cathedral town, and you are surprised that a city capable of such a piece of deception should lend itself to bribery and corruption.

Let the reader beware of another deception. The E. W., arriving in the evening, fell into an excess of rapture at what he took to be the tower of the cathedral, but which turned out to be four gigantic poplars planted close to the railway station, evidently with a view to mislead the public.

The wonders of this dissolute capital are not exhausted yet; far from it. The Eye-witness, emerging from his hotel on the first day of his stay in Gloucester, found a great crowd of young country girls and lads assembled at that part of the city which is called the Cross, where the four principal streets meet; a sort of forum, where most of the business and a great deal of the gossip of the place are discussed. These youngsters of both sexes were perfectly provincial in their appearance, and the lads especially, so much so as to remind one at once of Mr. Buckstone's inimitable 'get up' in the Rough Diamond. A burning thirst for information being one of the characteristics of your Eye-witness, he at once applied to that most anomalous of characters, a country-policeman with a frock-coat and a walking-stick, and asked to be enlightened as to the cause of this great gathering. *This question* was asked and answered twice before the E. W.

would believe that the provincial policeman had said that it was the Mop, or as the officer pronounced it the 'Mope' day. Three consecutive Mondays are set apart, once a-year, on which the farm servants come in from the country to be hired, accompanied in many instances by their friends, and the girls by their mothers. It is a pretty sight enough, and one which the Eye-witness would recommend to the attention of our artists, as far as he may venture to make a suggestion on a subject of which he knows nothing.

By the time that your Eye-witness had gained the information on the 'Mop' affair, and had noted that Gloucester, having in it a cathedral capable of providing church accommodation for the whole county, has besides as a matter of course about fifty other supplementary parish churches; by the time he had remarked this circumstance, which is the case in all cathedral towns, it was time for him to set off for the Shire Hall, where the election commission which he was bound to attend was held. He only stopped once on the way; it was to wonder at the admirable strain of irony in which the proprietor of a large sugar-plum shop spoke, through a printed hand-bill in his window, of a certain neighbouring brandy-ball vendor who had set up in opposition round the corner. He little knew, he said, speaking of his opponent's honour, 'he little knew how much of this valuable quality he possessed, and that *it hung about him like feathers about a pig!*' The writer communicates this comparison to the literary world with great glee, pleased to think that he is enriching their stock of images with so new and chaste a simile.

The Shire Hall of Gloucester is a most embarrassing place to get into. Not, indeed, for want of doors, but rather from a too great plenty of these means of entrance. The court in which the Election Commissioners were sitting is a semi-circular apartment in the interior of the hall, and round the whole half circle which encloses it are set the most puzzling and repelling doors that can be imagined, for they are all labelled as the different entrances by which every kind of person may be admitted *except* an Eye-witness. The E. W

went, in great distress of mind, from one of these sacred doors to another. 'Judge's door!' that won't do, I am not a judge; neither am I a grand-juryman, for whom I see this next entrance is set apart. There is another for petty-jurymen, but alas! I am not even a petty-juryman. Let me try another—'Bailiff,' no, not so bad as that either—'Magistrate,' no—'Witnesses,' stop, that will do. I am a witness, most decidedly, an Eye-witness. This is evidently my entrance.

Acting on this rash conclusion, and abandoning himself, as his manner is, to his destiny, the writer of this report opened the door, and descending a flight of steps, found himself in a gloomy cell and face to face with another provincial policeman. The following brief dialogue then took place; the E. W. abandoning himself, as has been said, to his destiny and to the fun of the moment.

P. P.—Are you a witness?

E. W.—Yes, an Eye-witness.

P. P.—A hi-witness! who b'ye for?

E. W.—I'm for 'All the Year Round.'

P. P.—Which side's that?

E. W.—Why the right side, of course; always.

P. P.—But there beant no right side, they're all wrong sides here.

Hearing this fearful announcement, the Eye-witness promptly withdrew, and returned once more to the corridor and the rows of doors. 'What am I to do?' said the E. W. to himself again. I am not a judge, nor a juryman, nor a bailiff, nor a counsel, nor a Mayor of Gloucester, nor apparently a witness. I have evidently no right in this court; unless, by-the-by, that little door at the end, which I have not yet tried, should answer my purpose. Let me examine it, 'Nisi prius,'—what's that? I dare say that's the entrance after all. Perhaps I am a nisi prius, it's impossible to say.'

This door gave the Eye-witness instant admission to the court; and taking the first seat he could find, he muttered to himself, 'then I *am* a nisi prius as I supposed, and I have *been living* in the world all this time and never found it out.'

Even now the Eye-witness' troubles were not all over, for, finding himself the object of general attention in the Court, and that much whispering was going on of which he appeared to be the subject, he looked behind him and saw in enormous characters the words 'Under Sheriff' inscribed upon the back of the seat over his head. To say that the E. W. cowered out of that seat would hardly express the rapidity with which he slunk away from this conspicuous position, and, taking the most obscure corner he was able to find, had at length leisure to look about him and see what was going on.

Perjury, evasion, shuffling, inappropriate mirth, and shameless acknowledgment of shameful practices—these were some of the things that were going on. Marvellous revelations of systematic bribery, and of the existence of firms established for the purpose of carrying elections on any terms—terms generally which the M. P. elect had better not inquire into too closely. Mystery—nobody knowing anything about anybody. Members of Parliament applying for mysterious messengers to carry mysterious sums of money to obscure inns, where mysterious assistants of the mysterious messengers pack up the money in parcels and hand them over to furtive surgeons who come in secret to fetch them away. Prescriptions, medicine, money, all mixed up and involved in such a sordid tissue of deceit and villany that no man can sift the thing perfectly, no man unravel altogether so tangled a mesh, nor walk through this dreary labyrinth of lies, the clue of which is guarded so carefully from his grasp.

To give a report of the evidence which the writer heard given in the Shire Hall on the different occasions of his attendance there would be simply to recapitulate what has already appeared in the different public prints, and an admirable report of which may be found in the Gloucestershire Chronicle, the principal local paper. The province of your Eye-witness seems rather to note any peculiarities which struck him during the progress of the case, to give the im

pressions left on his mind by what he has seen, and heard, and read, and the conclusion he has been able to arrive at. These impressions shall be set down much as he finds them in his notes, so that this report may be as much as possible like a sketch from nature, and may be said in some degree to have been written in the Court of Gloucester.

The story of a pure election in this ancient city is quite a hard thing to come at. The oldest inhabitant, when placed in the witness-box and desired to ransack his memory, beginning at 1816, can only say that he thinks before the Reform Act the bribery was more indirect; that he *thinks* the elections of '32, '33, and '35 were comparatively pure. The indirect bribery before the Reform Act was shown in the employment of bands, messengers, clerks, and flag-bearers, and also in swearing in so many special constables to keep the peace, that finding there was no peace to keep except their own, they used to take to fighting with each other in order to decide what was the best manner of attaining this desirable object. The money spent on elections now is a mere joke to what was disbursed in these good times. In 1816, £40,000 was laid out on one election, and no wonder, when 700 special constables (they might happen to be voters perhaps one or two of them) were sworn in to keep the peace at five shillings a day. This oldest inhabitant thinks that the first decidedly and undisguisedly impure election at Gloucester was that of '37, when he considers that his side was bought out of the market, *ninety* votes having gone out of their possession in the first three quarters of an hour of the poll. This gentleman, in concluding his evidence, said that he thought the venality less the fault of those who took the bribe than of those who offered it, and that if the candidates on both sides would agree to give nothing but the necessary expenses there would be no difficulty in putting down bribery.

Turning from these comparatively ancient elections to that with which we are now concerned, and examining briefly *its history* as it comes out before the Gloucester Commission,

it will be found that the tale so elaborately unfolded is simply this:—As the period of the election of 1859 approaches, the liberal party in Gloucester, anxious to secure another member to their side in addition to their usual representative, Mr. Price, despatches a deputation to London, the members of which have for their object the discovery of some available person holding liberal politics and a supporter of the ballot, who will consent to stand for Gloucester. The deputation, after paying sundry night visits to a great political club in Pall Mall, after some mystery and bandying about from pillar to post and callings again, gets at length to be introdued to a certain Mr. Monk, a son of a former Bishop of Gloucester, and therefore a likely man enough to have a chance of election in a city which was once under his father's pastoral care. After many pros and cons, and after much consulting of political friends, Mr. Monk consents to resign his pretensions to the agricultural borough of Cricklade, and to come down to Gloucester and contest the coming election with Sir Robert Carden, who is represented to be highly unpopular in the city. So far all is plain and tolerably straightforward, but from this point the obscurity becomes impenetrable, and the intricacy of the web something perfectly hopeless. From this point everybody is to manage Mr. Monk's affairs except Mr. Monk. From this point so completely is Mr. Monk superseded by Mr. Moffatt, an ex M.P., by Sir William Hayter, an existing M.P., by Mr. Ralli (Mr. Monk's father-in-law), and by many other persons, that one arrives at last at the conclusion that Mr. Monk himself must have passed his time in what Roman Catholics call a 'retreat,' not opening his own letters and finding the day to hang quite heavily on his hands.—About this period of affairs, too, a certain cheque for £500 (in an envelope) makes its appearance, whose career it is quite impossible to follow, though it is as well to try. First, Mr. Moffat asks Sir William Hayter if he knows a responsible person who will take a cheque for £500 (in an envelope) down to Gloucester. Then Sir W. Hayter *asks one* Webb (who serves one Gilbert,

who is a Parliamentary agent) the same question; then a new man, a Mr. Parkes, who is in the habit of 'passing Sir W. Hayter's lodgings,' comes upon the carpet, and gets mixed up with the cheque (and the envelope), to him enters another man called Thompson or Thornton, who, making application for the cheque (and envelope) and showing secret credentials, is intrusted with the same; and all becomes from that moment an entanglement of Moffat, Hayter, Thompson or Thornton, cheque, envelope, Parkes, and privacy, till the brain can stand it no more, and the present writer feels as if the very squeak of his pen upon the paper was too loud a noise to be permitted in so secret an affair.

After the arrival of Thompson or Thornton at an hotel near the railway station at Gloucester, the evidence brought before the Commissioners is more easily made out, and the machinery by which the Commission works (tracing the money from the man who brings it down to the agents who disburse it, and thence to the voters who are to be bribed, examining each in turn) becomes sufficiently obvious. A person named Wilton, a surgeon at Gloucester, visits this man Thompson at his inn, under pretence of prescribing for him, and carrying away the money which the other has brought with him, distributes it in small parcels to the agents, who are to come into actual communication with the electors, and to give them the money for their votes. Of course more money is soon wanted, in addition to our favourite £500; and strange indeed are the particulars which come out as to the secret correspondence of the agent at Gloucester with his principal in London; and an extraordinary revelation is brought about of the existence of firms, whose business is election bribery; and servants of these firms, who are nothing better than professional bribers, and whose function it is to conduct at elections all that dirty work which it is better the virtuous representatives of the people should know nothing about.

And what is Sir Robert Carden about all this time? Suppose we let him tell his own tale, just as the writer heard

him in the witness-box. We have told Mr. Monk's story for him; Sir Robert shall speak for himself.

Sir Robert Carden, a grey-headed, stalwart gentleman, tall and sturdy—Sir Robert Carden, standing erect in the witness-box, looking boldly about him, and betraying his nervousness only by a certain devil's tattoo of finger on the rail which surrounds him—Sir Robert Carden, answering the difficult questions something as a man does when playing at proverbs, is yet made to commit himself to the following statements:—That in 1857 a deputation waited upon him from Gloucester, and represented to him that the Conservative party was gaining force in that city, and that in the event of his consenting to stand, there seemed every chance of his securing the election. Sir Robert Carden had no connexion with Gloucester at all; but we are not to suppose for a moment that the Conservative party in the town had heard of a certain election which took place once at St. Albans; and knowing the value of money in a contest at Gloucester, thought that the gentleman who had shown the extent of his pecuniary resources at St. Albans, would be the very man for them. This never crossed their minds—it is extraordinary, by-the-by, how few things *did* cross the minds of the different witnesses who gave their evidence in the Shire Hall; they appear, all, to have been the most innocent, unsuspicious, thoughtless fellows imaginable. And if all, surely most of all, Sir Robert. He thought Gloucester so pure a borough that it seemed to him an honour to represent it. He asked the deputation when it waited upon him, what would be the probable cost of the election, and was told between five and six hundred pounds; yet, when his expenses (the petition included), come to upwards of *four thousand* pounds, he asks no questions, suspects no bribery, looks into no statements, and has received no account of the expenditure to this day. He had implicit confidence in his agent, and would have paid more still if he had been asked. And pray, Sir Robert Carden, is it your practice in other matters of business, to pay away these large sums without looking into

the accounts?—No, only at elections! And after paying all this money, Sir Robert still thought this election of 1857 a pure one, till he heard of the evidence which had come out before the Commission. Certainly this gentleman is of an unsuspicious nature; the election of '57, the hideous revelations that came out at St. Albans,—all these things are thrown away upon him, and he comes down in 1859, still guiltless of any suspicion of corrupt practices, still confiding in the Gloucester electors, still ready to disburse his money, to the amount of two thousand four hundred and ninety-five pounds fifteen shillings and five pence, and all not paid yet. He had said to his agent 'anybody who renders me a service, pay them liberal,' but had never been told that it would be necessary to resort to bribery; and if he had known of the corrupt practices which took place in '57, would, he solemnly declares, never have stood in '59. Once more he reiterates that he had implicit confidence in his agent; and now he adds, that he wishes he had not had so much confidence in him; that it would have been better that he should have required an account of the expenditure that had taken place; and that he hopes Mr. Lovegrove (which is the agent's name) will account for it all honestly.

Having now got our candidates to Gloucester, it may be interesting to observe some of the chief characteristics of a thoroughly impure election; the system adopted by the local agents, the manner of its carrying out, and some of the chief points, both ludicrous and flagitious, which came out in the extraordinary process called 'working an election.' The first thing to be done is for the candidate—or more probably the friends who 'act for him,'—to appoint an agent in the town where the election takes place; and the next thing is for all parties to have implicit confidence in each other, or, in other words, to ask no questions. The candidate then, or his friends, send for the agent, place the affair in his hands, and ask no questions; then the agent sends for some gentleman well known as not being troubled with scruples, hands over to him certain sums of money, and asks

no questions; then the gentleman without scruples sends for a number of other gentlemen without scruples, hands the moneys over to them to disburse in the *expenses of the election*, and asks no questions. Here, unfortunately, this admirable system of 'asking no questions' is at an end, for it appears that these lower ministers, in the actual working of the election, are obliged to ask a great many questions. They go into people's houses and ask whether they are behind-hand with their rent, and how much will clear them; and then they say that they think they know a party who will 'shell out' to the amount required, and they do not ask for a vote in return, far from it; but they are sadly afraid that the party aforesaid, who has strong political feeling, will not 'shell out' to anybody who does not agree with him that Carden, or Monk, as the case may be, is the man for Gloucester. Nor are these the only questions that are asked. Sometimes a gentleman is discovered at tea, and is asked if that beverage is sweet enough; and if not, how many *lumps of sugar* he will take in it?—an innocent demand enough, unless it should turn out that the lumps of sugar mean lumps of gold, and that his tea will not be sweetened unless he plumps for Price and Monk.

Examining the proceedings of these minor agents in the 'working of the election,' we shall find that, were it not that the excessive seriousness of the subject makes it almost a sacrilege to laugh at anything connected with it, it would be quite impossible not to enjoy, in an excessive degree, the highly humorous performance of some of the lower actors in the ghastly melodrama which we are now reviewing.

The comedian who expressed himself as having taken so much refreshment, that he was 'on a running fuddle' all through the election; the apparently maddened fly-proprietor, who stated that he had not been between the sheets at the time of the election for twenty-six days and nights, and who with exquisite *naïveté*, wished there had never been an election, and *hoped there would never be another;* the witness who said that when he was offered £10 for his vote, Mr. Monk (the

candidate) who was standing near, on hearing money talked about 'very properly' walked away; the henpecked gentleman whose wife had received the bribe, and who said the attorney 'didn't give it to me, he gave it to she—and she's missus and master too;' the honourable voter whose principles are worth £2, since he had rather vote for Price and Monk at £8 than for Carden at £10; all these are humourists of a high order, and worthy to rank with that lawyer who said, that if the election had been carried on on the purity dodge, everybody knows *he* would have had nothing to do with it, or that ingenuous family who got £80 among them for their votes including £3 for a dead man, who had voted on the same terms at previous elections—'post mortem!'

But what are all these to our pet witness, Jacobs? Jacobs, the general factor, who begins his evidence at once by saying, 'I received £177 from Mr. John Wilton, and expended it in bribery,' and who adds immediately that the first money he paid was £3—the only legitimate payment he made—to Mr. Moses (!) for coming from Liverpool to vote. This comedian after recounting several exploits in bribing says, 'the next man—if I can call him a man—vash vun Villiam Merrittsh. He had £5 7*s.* 6*d.* to vote for Price and Monk. I had to vatch him very close—he told me he should quarter on the enemy, as Mr. Lovegrovesh vash crazy after him.' Jacobs sometimes meets with a voter who is troubled with a conscience, such as Mr. Welsh who will not speak, but holds up five fingers by which he means £5; then says he never takes the money, but on the ingenious Jacobs proposing to play a game of skittles, or to jump with him for the amount finds his conscience at ease; Mr. Welsh too is so scrupulous that he requests that the money may not be put into his hand, but left on the chimney-piece at a certain public-house where he can find it, and finally this conscientious personage after receiving £1 in this manner is bought over by the enemy, and votes for Carden. It was the opinion of Mr. Jacobs that this Welsh was 'a Uriah Heap sort of man,' and indeed he

does not come out altogether as an estimable character. When Jacobs offers to pay his day's expenses if he will vote on the liberal side, he answers that a man 'ought to have more than a day's work to change his mind.' Upon this the wily Jacobs changes his tactics, and wisely determines to get Mrs Welsh over to his side. 'There were some nice little childrensh playing about,' he says, 'and I takes up vun of 'em and gives it a shilling—then the good voman varms up and says, her husband shall take two or three poundsh less from us—I paid her £5, and she went and bought pigs vith it; but,' adds the pork-abhorring Jacobs, 'I did not give it her for *that*.' Our good friend with all his cunning is sometimes, as the wisest of us may be, sadly taken in. 'I now come,' he goes on to say, 'to three bad lots, Frederick Vingate, Thomas Vingate, and Thomas Knight. I had lotsh of trouble with those men. Their prices vash too high. They talked a deal of nonsense, and said they vanted £15 a man; I told 'em I could not, and vould not give it; after vich they said they could get it upon the other side, and be put upon the committee, and all sorts of nice things. On the morning of the poll they sends to me, and says, "vell there is humbugging on the other side," and I gave 'em six poundsh each, and after all they threw me over the bridge.' Jacobs is proud of his philosophy, and when a voter whom he had been hankering after, goes over to the enemy and shouts aloud as he passes him in the street, 'a plumper for Carden,' our good friend says, 'he meant it to annoy me—but it did not.' But there is no end to Jacobs, and we must cut him short, however reluctantly, at once.

A word or too now on witnesses and witness-boxes.

There are few more embarrassing positions in the world than that of a witness in a witness-box. Elevated high above the heads of his audience, railed in in a sort of pen, conscious that all eyes are fixed upon him, the witness becomes in almost every instance a confused and guilty-looking being, and all the more so if he tries to look jaunty and unembarrassed. The one great object which it is desirable for a witness to

attain is the power of keeping still. Let him not writhe, let him not attitudinise, let him by no means run his hand through his hair, let him keep his eye fixed on the person who is examining him, and haply he may manage to avoid looking like a pickpocket. Even at best there is so much in position that the writer was surprised on meeting, in the street, one or two of those witnesses whom he had seen examined, to note that they really looked like rather respectable men, and did not appear as they did in the witness-box to have two or three murders at least weighing on their minds. While on this subject it may be as well to mention that short witnesses have great advantages over long ones, being more sheltered by wood-work, and less bare and exposed in their appearance than those gifted with taller proportions.

The present writer saw some wonderful and memorable things in connexion with the witness-box in the Shire Hall at Gloucester, to some of which he now invites the reader's attention. There was the carpenter and 'jyner' as he called himself, who moistened his palms as he ascended the rostrum, as if he was going to plane his way through his evidence. There was the lady with gloves and a veil who was in business, and had no evidence to give on the particular matter in hand, but was quite ready to launch into many interesting statements on things in general, and especially with regard to her own affairs; and, indeed, in this, and in protestations of future amendment, and never doing anything wrong again, all the witnesses were profuse. Then there was the disconsolate witness who sighed as if his heart would break between each answer; the conceited witness who, seeing that his words were being taken down by the short-hand writer, waxed eloquent and stopped long between his sentences, glancing down at the writer aforesaid to see that one paragraph was finished before he began another. In addition to these there was the witness who brought documents, and in the course of his narrative continually put his hand in his pocket for appropriate and corroborative papers, but never found them till his tale had got long past the place where they would be

of any use. Nor must we omit the witness who *would* look at anybody in court whom he happened to mention in his evidence; and besides the witness whom his friends in remote corners of the building *would* prompt, there was the man who had forgotten his part, and who deliberately appealed to his friends for assistance, saying, 'in the year—I say George, what year was that when Lightpocket lost the election for Mayor?'

It was a remarkable thing, and one which proves that every man ought to have a profession, that no man who after being sworn was asked what he was and answered that he was a 'gentleman,' failed to look like an ass when he said so. And this is indeed a wretched way of describing a man who has nothing to do, implying that he who has a profession is not a gentleman and infinitely inferior in every way to the Italian designation 'possedente,' or the French 'rentier.' It is noteworthy, too, that a man sitting in court, and occupying a position between the examiner and the witness who is under examination, will not uncommonly look dreadfully confused and infinitely wretched when he hears his own name brought in in the evidence, and his own affairs discussed over the very top of his head. The Eye-witness hopes it will not be misconstrued into want of respect for the sex if he says that, in addition to the things already mentioned, he was also struck by the extreme reluctance of those wives of voters who had received a bribe for their husbands to hand the same over to their worser halves, on their return from business. The man whose wife had declined to part with the money she received, and who stoutly maintained in consequence that he had not been bribed at all, was a sharp fellow enough, and a close and astute reasoner.

There are some more witnesses yet, who must not be dismissed without a word. There was the man who did not know whom he had voted for, and who, in the wildness of his confusion, when he complained of the badness of his memory, put his hand to his stomach, as if that were the seat of the quality in question; there was the man who asked to be

examined to relieve his mind, and who had had nothing to do with the election at all; there was the man who began an anecdote, and repenting of it gave it up as not connected with the subject (an opinion in which the Commissioners entirely coincided); there was the man who ascended the box like a clergyman coming into the pulpit, pressing his papers down heavily, arranging his handkerchief as if for a long speech, and being cut short almost before he had begun; and, lastly, there was the poor old attorney, all in black, with black gloves and a high black mohair stock, whose appearance, as he held on to the sides of the witness-box, moved to an excess the pity of your Eye-witness, so that it was quite a relief to him when he heard that the poor old man had done no harm after all.

There was one circumstance connected with the examination of the witnesses, which it gave the writer great pleasure to observe. It was this; they were *not* cautioned against saying everything they knew. It has doubtless not escaped the reader's attention that at our coroners' inquests, and on other similar occasions, a witness has no sooner entered the box than the coroner or magistrate, or whoever else is in office, entreats him in the most earnest and affectionate language to take great care not to commit himself. 'On no account,' says the coroner or magistrate aforesaid, 'on no account, my dear sir, say anything that can get you into trouble; our object here is by no means to get you to let out everything, whether it involves you in a charge yourself or not; we are far from thinking that if you have had a criminal share in the present transaction the more you criminate yourself the better; I assure you that is the last thing we could wish, so mind what you are about—for heaven's sake! mind what you are about.' This cautioning of those who have just sworn to tell the whole truth that they had better think twice before they do so, has reached such a point that we need not despair of living to see the day when the evidence shall be whispered by the witness into the ear of the *legal* gentleman who 'watches the case for the prisoner,'

and who will by that means be enabled at once to smother any unpleasant particulars which the witness might otherwise have let out, and to strangle them in their birth. It was a pleasant thing to observe that nothing of this sort went on in the Election Inquiry at Gloucester, and that the witnesses were encouraged to commit themselves as much as possible, and openly enough they did so in many instances; speaking with a degree of candour which would almost have commanded one's respect, but that it was too often apparent that this extreme frankness savoured of shamelessness, whilst in other instances it was resorted to as the best means of securing a certificate of indemnity.

It would be an interesting thing to examine, did space permit it, how the question of an extended franchise is affected by what has recently transpired in connexion with the subject of election bribery, and how far by increasing so largely the number of electors we should be rendering such bribery impossible. That the mere fact of giving larger numbers of the lower orders a voice at elections will not be the means of abolishing corrupt practices, is rendered sufficiently obvious by what has come out at Gloucester, where witness after witness of the lowest class proclaimed his own venality from the box, and where the words that head this article rung in one's ears all day. It may indeed be a question whether this is the case to so full an extent in our manufacturing towns, and whether the readiness to sacrifice gain to a principle (however mistaken), which shows itself in the occasional 'strikes' which occur among them, does not indicate that, in the class of intelligent workmen at any rate, there exists an element to which bribery would appeal in vain.

One impression at any rate which has been left on the mind of your Eye-witness, he thinks it right to mention. It is this: he believes that the main local actors in the Gloucester election were influenced, and influenced almost solely, by political motives. We in London have little idea of what politics are in the country, or to use their own phrase, how 'high they run.' *Here is a town* like Gloucester with its

two political clubs, the Conservative and the Reform; here are men risking their professional prospects, in many instances paying money out of pocket (the writer heard this himself in evidence); here are instances of lawyers bestowing an amount of labour and time upon an election which, given to anything else, would have insured a fee of three times the amount which the election brought in; here is a member of that profession which of all others requires the most, in its followers, an unsullied name—that of medicine—here is a surgeon, risking his practice and owning that he has done what is detrimental to his personal prospects and even to his success in life—and all this, surely, not for the paltry profits of the election, but from political feeling and prejudice. Politics are in a country town almost like a religion, and an election acts on the place like a revival.

This is the case with only the chief actors in the drama. With the rest what is it? A race, a tearing, headlong race for gold—or for silver, as the case may be. The voluntary sale of a constituency, the barter of a seat in Parliament for so much money; a town indifferent as to who represents it so long as it may but claw at the gold, and which would feel disfranchisement itself, more because it lost a marketable commodity, than because it was declared to be unworthy of a great and sacred trust.

Sitting in that court and watching the proceedings closely, it was impossible not to feel ashamed and pained to an excess to see gray-headed citizens, and townsmen high in office, sitting in their places pale with apprehension, standing in the witness-box proclaiming their own misdeeds, or retiring from it, abashed and crestfallen like chidden schoolboys. Well might that innocent perjurer, whose words we have already quoted, say, that he wished there had never been an election, and hoped there would never be another; and well might a rustic, seated in the court behind the writer of these words, turn to his mate and say, 'I say, Jack, "honesty's the best policy" after all.'

IX.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE MANNER IN WHICH A CONGREGATION WILL SOMETIMES SHOW ITS DISAPPROVAL OF ECCLESIASTICAL IRREGULARITIES, AND A PARISH CLERGYMAN HIS INDISCREET ZEAL IN A VERY FOOLISH MATTER.

THIS is your Eye-witness's report of a visit to St. George's-in-the-East.

'NO POPERY,' written in large characters by some enthusiastic worshipper, upon the wood-work of the first pew which the E. W. was shown into.

'NO POPERY' on all the blank walls in the neighbourhood of the church; also handbills of an insatiably and ferociously Protestant nature. Handbills inviting householders to meet in vestry rooms and talk; handbills inviting young men, apparently *not* householders, to meet in school-rooms and talk—not that they would get a chance of talking when they got there, for was not the Rev. Earwaker Tibbs to preside, and how shall a word be got in edgeways where he is?

More handbills; red handbills, green handbills, prismatic handbills; handbills inviting the offending clergy to come and be argued with on platforms (Tibbs was in this); handbills imploring anybody to come and argue anywhere; handbills challenging discussion; and some of a more truculent kind still, informing the local public that their liberties were in danger, and suggesting that they should take the matter into their own hands. In short, there were addresses in every imaginable form, and of every conceivable colour, and invitations full of such rich argumentative promise that it became evident that the whole neighbourhood was reeking with eloquence and wisdom, and that any amateur of these qualities would do well to frequent the purlieus of St. George's-in-the-East, where they would find sermons in vestries, books on the tongues of householders, and Tibbs in everything.

But where is St. George's-in-the-East? How is it approached? What sort of a building is the church to look at?

St. George's-in-the-East *is* in the east with a vengeance,

and very much more towards that point of the compass than the Eye-witness had at all bargained for. He had found by reference to the Post Office Directory that this Temple of Discord was in Cannon Street, and determined to be in good time. He entered that imposing thoroughfare at half-past ten on a fine Sunday morning, being that of September the eleventh, 1859. After investigating all the churches that lay in little back courts on each side of the street; after peeping into some of them and finding them perfectly empty; after rendering certain aged pew-openers (who took him for the congregation) mad with joy by his appearance, and then plunging them into despair by his withdrawal; after wondering at the perversity which hinders the removal of these useless buildings to other sites where they are so much wanted; after these things, your servant found himself at the eastern end of Cannon Street without having made the discovery he was bent upon, and quite at sea as to where to look next for St. George's-in-the-East.

It is best to ask a policeman in these cases.

The officer to whom the E. W. applied for advice, turned instinctively upon his solid heels towards the east, and waving his hand in that direction after the manner of one who was requesting the metropolis generally to move on, intimated that he did not know exactly where the church was situated, but that it was somewhere in the neighbourhood of Tower Hill.

To the east did the next policeman turn. The Eye-witness consulted him when he had got to the Tower. 'St. George's-in-the-East,' he said, 'was close to Ratcliff Highway, 'and Ratcliff Highway?' inquired the E. W. The policeman pointed to the east.

When the Eye-witness had consulted one more member of our constabulary, and found him to know nothing about the subject at all, he became weary of the force, and determined to apply next to a civilian; so, seeing a baker standing at the open door of his shop, waiting for the neighbourhood's Sunday dinners, the E. W. approached him and asked the

old question once more in a low voice—for he was ashamed of it.

The baker was deaf, and the Eye-witness had to repeat his inquiry at the top of his voice three times, before he got an answer. The little boys who accumulated at the rate of four to each repetition of the demand, amounted to quite a train as they followed the E. W. during the rest of his journey, which was happily not a much longer one, though still to the east.

To the credit of the Post Office Directory let it be said that the church of St. George is in Cannon Street after all; not, indeed, in the well-known thoroughfare of that name, but in one in the immediate neighbourhood of the Thames Tunnel. The building itself is set back from the street a considerable distance. It is approached by a flight of steps, and is a large and melancholy edifice of about the period of Sir Christopher Wren, with a high tower surrounded by eight flat pilasters, on the summit of each of which is a dwarf column with festoons around its capital, and forming as ugly a top to a tower as you will find anywhere. There were few people standing about outside the church, and to the writer's surprise but a very small congregation when he got within it.

Just as your Eye-witness takes off his hat on entering a sacred building, so now as he speaks briefly of what took place inside the church of St. George-in-the-East, he desires to lay aside any such lightness of expression as might even *seem* to savour of irreverence. And indeed he saw (though not at first) much that shocked and disgusted him, and not more of the ludicrous than mixes inevitably with all that is gravest and saddest in the world.

So much has been written in description of the services as carried on at St. George's, that it is unnecessary to say more than that there seemed little difference between the manner of their celebration there, and that adopted at the principal High-church places of worship at the more western extremity of the metropolis. The officiating clergyman had so arranged his master-of-arts' hood as to show more perhaps of the red

lining than ordinarily appears, and there was a more frequent turning to the east than would be found at St. Barnabas or the church in Wells Street. The attempts at decoration of the chancel and Communion-table were poor and paltry in the extreme, and certainly not calculated to offend by their magnificence.

Throughout the morning service the conduct of the very small congregation was perfectly orderly, and no allusion whatever was made in the sermon to the subject which was doubtless in everybody's mind. The Eye-witness left the building, supposing that the riots at St. George's-in-the-East were at an end.

Having made up his mind to do what he did thoroughly, the Eye-witness had resolved to 'stand off and on' at his post all day. He had plenty of leisure now before the afternoon lecture to examine the neighbourhood in which he found himself, and with which he (as is probably the case with the reader) was little familiar.

A wonderful neighbourhood. Fishy, tarry, inexpressibly dirty, and so nautical that the very weathercock upon its principal church partook of the spirit of the place, and represented a frigate under full sail, with a Union Jack to show the quarter of the wind.

A wonderful neighbourhood to be sure, that region east of the Tower. You hardly know that you are in London at all as you walk through the streets. Many of the shops kept by Jews are open though it is Sunday ; the Jews and Jewesses sitting at the open doors, fat, cheerful, affectionate, and jewelled. It is a neighbourhood perfectly nautical in all its habits. It is decidedly a low neighbourhood, but redeemed from being of the lowest by that very nautical element. Let the reader compare Ratcliff Highway with the New Cut, Lambeth, and he will understand this. It is a neighbourhod of canvas trousers and sou'-wester hats, of sextants and the boxing of compasses. It abounds, too, in negroes, gay in their clothing and more gay in their countenances. It abounds in American skippers, with brown and lantern-jaws,

thin and tough, and tawny. It abounds in mysterious seamen too, who wear black satin waistcoats and have worked fronts to their shirts, and ear-rings in their ears. There are herrings, too, in this region, and life-belts, and block-makers' warehouses, and awful advertisements published by the Trinity House concerning wrecks and buoys, and light-ships in remote and lonely places far away at sea. Cranes, too, and bales of goods, such as are brought in in pantomimes and, being slapped, turn to other things. The bales of goods are not swinging from the cranes because it is Sunday, but one catches sight of them through open warehouse-doors, and in passing great stores that smell of turmeric and many other drugs and goodly spices.

Such was the neighbourhood through which the Eye-witness wandered a not-displeased observer of all these new and characteristic circumstances. It was in this neighbourhood that he partook of such a modest luncheon as might fit him for the fatigues of the day, and all the items of which were flavoured with the herrings with which, it has been already said (as with other salt fish), the region kites are fatted.

When the Eye-witness returned in the afternoon to the church of St. George's in the East, a widely different scene awaited him to that which he had been present at in the morning. There was a mob in the street in front of the church; a mob upon the steps, and such crowds in all the approaches to the interior of the building, and in the aisles and about the doors that for a long time he was unable to form any notion of what was going on. Having at length, with great difficulty, got just inside one of the entrances of the church, the Eye-witness found that the afternoon lecturer put in by the Low-church party was in the midst of his discourse, which was to be succeeded by that celebration of the Litany which had given so much offence to the parishioners of St. George's.

At the conclusion of the lecture, and it is only fair to the preacher to say that he exhorted his hearers most earnestly to disperse quietly, and to leave the affair in the hands of the Bishop—at the conclusion of the lecture only a portion of

the congregation left the building, by far the greater mass remaining behind, evidently with a very hostile feeling towards the anticipated service. The conduct of many of these persons was, throughout, very unseemly. They talked in their ordinary tones, they crowded into the pews which commanded a good view of what was going on in numbers such as the seats were never intended to contain, they stood upon the benches, and they completely blocked up the aisles and the chancel of the church in front of the Communion rails. Nor was this all, about twenty or five-and-twenty minutes having elapsed after the conclusion of the lecture just alluded to, and the moment of the commencement of the Litany having arrived, the entrance of the clergyman was saluted by a storm of hissing and groaning very painful to hear anywhere, but especially shocking in a church. About this mob, too, there seemed to be something inexpressibly stupid as well as ferocious. There they stood, contented with blocking up the place, but not stopping the service from proceeding. There, too, they stood when the Litany was concluded; and while the organist, who appeared to have selected the longest and noisiest voluntary from his collection, endeavoured to play them out. They were not to be played out, however, and evidently seemed to think it excellent sport to stand there howling out words of their own to the tune played upon the organ.

Now surely it must be obvious to every one that such a state of things as this ought to be, under any circumstances, impossible. If on the one hand, as is assuredly the case, a hideous responsibility is on the shoulders of any person who can be so inconceivably and supernaturally weak as to offend and outrage a congregation among whom his ministrations might be useful, for the sake of paltry trifles, unimpressive and foolish in the last degree and wholly without value—if it is monstrous in an educated man, as indeed it is, to persist in saying one sentence with his face to the east, and another turned towards the west, to twist his honest master-of-arts' od into the nearest attainable resemblance to the back view

of a chasuble, when he knows he is giving offence to many persons besides exposing his own fatuity; if these things are preposterous and childish, and even—under the circumstances—wicked, does the blame stop here? Does none attach in such a case to the parish authorities? ought those disgraceful scenes to be possible in a church under any conceivable circumstances? Is not this a case in which the police should act as they would in other buildings? Surely when there is plenty of room to sit down and an abundance of empty pews, people have no right to fill the aisles and the chancel of the church to their complete blocking up. Surely when a pew is made to hold six persons, and twelve are found in it, half that number are subject to removal. Surely persons standing on benches in a church may be made to sit down; and those who hiss and groan, and talk loudly, may be taken out. If this question could not have been settled by a mere handful of policemen in plain clothes, then would it not have been better, till it was finally decided what form of worship should be adopted in this unhappy church, and who should be listened to and who not, that St. George's-in-the-East should have been shut up, and so this scandal have been avoided.

In this particular case the worst is now over; but such difficulties may arise again in other parishes, and there may be a recurrence of such scenes as have been here put on record.

The Eye-witness, tired out and thoroughly disgusted, left that great and foolish crowd still standing and blocking up the church long after the organ (which had been for half an hour roaring at the top of its strength to drown their noise) had ceased to play. The din of this instrument, and the heat produced by the mass of people inside the church, made the E. W. only too glad to get out, though it was to find himself in a fresh mob. These appeared to be all engaged in discussing theology, and all, to judge from their fingers, shoemakers; who are, by-the-by, among the most disputatiously inclined of men.

The crowd outside showed no inclination to disperse. It was cut up into little knots, and here was very manifest the advantage possessed by the talking members of the mob over the silent ones. These last, surrounding the first and looking on in open-mouthed admiration, which was never the least diminished, but rather increased by their inability to understand what it was all about. There was one very curious characteristic of this scene, which is quite worthy of comment. The different orators here assembled, by no means confined themselves to the subject of the day. Indeed the disturbances in the church appeared to be quite lost sight of, and the speakers to have seized this as a good opportunity of hearing themselves talk, and of promulgating their own theories whatever they might happen to be. Approaching one group, the Eye-witness (who is an Ear-witness too, and ever prowling about in search of matter worthy of record) finds a stout gentleman discoursing on church-rates; while the centre of the next mass of listeners is holding forth upon the unjust division of property, and to judge by his appearance it must doubtless seem to him to be very unjust indeed, uncommonly little having fallen to his share. The muscular gentleman in black, with the hymn-book in his hand, is limiting the number of those who hold the truth to some half-a-dozen (self-included), while the very ill-looking man with the pale lips, and the passionate face with the scar on his forehead and with the alpaca coat, is holding an argument on tee-totalism with a man who is obviously a ship's steward, and who appears to enjoy the confidence of the bystanders to a very great extent indeed, and (if fat is worth) to deserve it. The argument was not originally between the fat steward and the evil-faced man, but between this last and a thin man with a small head. But the steward cutting into the discourse was at once encouraged to represent the constituency, and the man with the small face was tacitly invited to retire and accept the Chiltern Hundreds.

'You're discussing this here question wrong,' broke in the steward; 'just let me have a word or two.'

'Hear him,' said a fat and silent gentleman, who formed one of the audience.

'You will allow me to remark,' said the evil-faced man, the hand which he lifted in deprecation, trembling violently with anger, 'that I am arguing with this gentleman,' (pointing to him of the small countenance,) 'and not with you.'

'He can't make nothing of it,' the steward interposed, 'so you just have it out with me, and don't be in such a rage about it; look how your hand's shaking, that ain't a sign of being in the right. It's a sign of a weak mind, that's what that is.' The evil-faced man put his hand into the opening of his waistcoat, but he couldn't hide the quivering of his lips, or get any colour into his face.

'Now the arguing of this here question is simple enough,'—

'Hear him,' remarked the fat man, looking round as if he was the proprietor of the steward and was proud of him.

'This here,' continued the steward, 'is a question of right and wrong. One of us is right, and the other's wrong—very well. Now the question is which *is* right, and which is wrong.'

'Ah,' sighed the fat man, 'he's got him there.'

'Very well,' the steward proceeded; 'now we'll suppose two people standing talking as it might be here. One 'on 'em says, as it might be me, which it is easy to suppose, we are in a county contigious to this, and that the 'op gardens is all surrounding us, and the 'op poles a bending with their weight'—

'You are wandering from the point,' says he of the evil face and the alpaca coat.

'He looks around him,' proceeded the other with a graceful wave of the hand, and heedless in the fervency of his eloquence of all interruption; 'he looks around him, and he says, leastways *I* says,' continued the steward suddenly abandoning his metaphor, 'and why all these 'ere 'ops, I says, unless for beer?'

'Ah, why indeed?' echoes the fat man, smacking his lips.

'Unless for beer,' repeated the steward, fearful lest if he paused the evil-faced man should get a chance,—'why these crops of malt—'

'Malt does not grow in crops,' interposed the evil-faced man, 'it is made by man's wickedness from barley.'

'Do you suppose I don't know that?' the other answered, 'which, my own uncle on the mother's side keeping the Barley Mow at Cobham, and as well a conducted house as any in the county. Talk about malt, why,'—

'Come,' interposes the deep voice of a policeman, 'you must' get out out of this. Don't you see you're obstructing the way.—Come.'

And thus this instructive argument was brought to an untimely end, to the great annoyance of your Eye-witness, and that of two old women who were listening in the crowd.

'I likes to hear them talk,' said the first of these ladies.

'And so do I,' replied the other, 'they seem to explain it like. Don't they?'

The other groups of talkers were soon similarly dispersed by the strong arm of the law; and as the church was by this time cleared too, it was not long before the Eye-witness found himself standing quite alone, in the dusk, before the closed gates of St. George's-in-the-East.

X.

HIS EVIDENCE AS IT AFFECTS A MYSTIC AND FABULOUS BEAST, KNOWN BY THE NAME OF THE GIGANTIC SALAMANDER, OR THE FOSSIL MAN OF ANDREW SCHEUCHZER.

It is difficult at any time of life, unless you are a subscriber, and so have parted with your illusions for ever—it is difficult, let us admit, to contemplate a visit to the Zoological Gardens with any other sensations than those eager ones which in early days used to attend one to the entrance gate of that mystic enclosure. To 'Fellows' and others who are in the habit of using the 'Zoological' as a lounge, the place is doubtless a pleasant garden, prettily laid out, where you meet your friends; where ladies can show their dresses to advantage; and where there are, by-the-by, some interesting animals which are in every respect an additon to the attraction of the gardens, except in the musty smell which is attributable to their presence. These are the feelings of the Sunday visitors and the habitues of the place; but they are not those of the occasional visitor, who has visited this pleasaunce sparingly, and who is not zoologically used up.

To such persons, the beauty of the gardens is a thing but little noted. The animals, and the wild beasts especially, are everything. As he pays his money at the gate, the visitor who has retained that freshness which is one of the greatest of earthly blessings, is irresistibly taken back to his old childish days. The click of the turnstile that admits him seems to have snipped a score of years off his life; and already sniffing from afar that faint musty odour of exaggerated mouseness which pervades the place, he feels that he is returning once more to the days of lessons and holidays, of a coercion whose strongest restrictions were liberty itself to the restraints of later life; and that he has entered a region of wonder and delight, of lions, tigers, bears—and buns. Let those who read these words (subscribers, as noted above, excepted), pause for a moment, and examine themselves carefully as to

whether they have not still some cherished memory of L for lion in the spelling-book, illustrated by a small wood-cut of an animal with a human profile, like that on a George-the-Third shilling. The single huge dab of yellow, which covered much more of the spelling-book than it did of the lion, was executed, if the reader remembers, with a free hand, and gives one the idea that five thousand spelling-books were ranged in order before the artist, open at L; that the five thousand yellow dabs were all done in a twinkling, while the brush was wet; and that then the green brush was similarly called into play, to decorate that bush, which is the only object that breaks the sandy desert in which the king of beasts is standing. Well, it is this appalling animal that the visitor—still excepting that unhappy class already noted—is going to behold, not to speak of T for tiger, or of the wolf that killed Red Ridinghood. Yes, there is no doubt about it, the memories and reflections revived by these gardens are of the pleasantest order, and are associated not only with the realization of spelling-book marvels, but, as if that alone was not enough, are also identified with the possession of an extra sixpence to spend in buns and ginger-beer. Just Heaven! how one used to long for those buns; and indeed in all the pleasures of that period, how inseparably were the joys of the refreshment-room commingled. To what purpose, then, the play without oranges and a supper? to what purpose the 'Zoological' without buns and ginger-beer? Oh misery! that now when we might get cakes and ginger-beer to our heart's content, we have lost the taste for such wares, and abstain from these delicacies out of choice, and fearful of spoiling our dinners. Are buns and oranges the only things which we are kept short of while we value them? are they the only prizes which, when we at last have them within reach, are found to be wanting in flavour?

Let the reader who has entered the gardens with feelings such as are here described, and who was rejuvenised at the gate in the outer circle, let him make the best use of his shaky old legs while these sensations last, and get to the

bear-pit at any rate before they are quite lost. His limbs, which haply many rheumatisms have nipped and griped for him, scarcely hoist him up to the edge of that terrible den with the alacrity which was once their characteristic. He will no longer hasten off to a distant refreshment-room to purchase those sweet cakes which the bears delight in, that he may tempt them to climb the pole. He will make gestures of encouragement with his stick to the old brown rascals as they look up at him. He will glance for a moment in the direction of the bun depôt; but go in search of those articles of food he will not, no, not for many bears. These knowing gentry will not mount the pole for nothing—albeit it is easy climbing—and our poor old buck feels that he is no longer young after all, and leaves the edge of the den with a sigh. The bears look after him as he departs, with an expression which seems to say, 'No, you're not the kind of man we want at all.'

Come, let us own that we are all unanimous on one subject; that we are all agreed that T for tiger should never *sit down*. He may lie down in any attitude he likes; he will never do so in an ugly one. He may sprawl about to his heart's content. He may stand, walk, or raise himself on his hind legs as much as he chooses; but when he sits down he invariably looks like an ass, and the spectator loses all respect for him. It is possible that T for tiger has never been represented by a nobler specimen than the larger of the two now exhibited in the gardens of the Zoological Society; but when your Eye-witness saw him sitting down on his bed like a cat and yawning, he felt that the magnificence of the beast was not proof against the effect of such behaviour, and that T for tiger was forgetting himself. Your Servant would seriously advise the noble Society of Zoology to have a word with this member of their company, who is really making himself too cheap. Not only does he insist on sitting down and looking cheerfully and with levity about him, as a cat will look after summer flies, but your Servant would also call the attention of the Society to the fact, that this shameless animal is in the habit of performing, on the near approach of his

dinner-hour, a sort of maniac dance, jumping over his companion's back, and his companion over his, in a frantic, sidelong, leap-frog of anticipation, executed with incredible rapidity for a quarter of an hour before the victuals reach him. T for tiger is really losing himself by this conduct, and unless he takes this word of advice from a friend, will gradually fall into contempt.

It is a wretched life for that Nubian lion, who is always looking off into that little bit of distance which is open to him at the end of the terrace; it is a wretched life for him, and indeed for all these beasts, to have nothing to look forward to but their meat all the day long. No adventure, no change of scene, no soft sand, no shady trees. There is a whole book-full of testimony to the ennui of such a life in that wild look 'off' of the lion, as he stands erect in his strength. The same exploring glance into the furthest distance within range is observable too in his neighbour the tiger, who, that he may get a yet greater extent of the Regent's Park within view, will raise himself to an enormous height on his hind legs, propping himself with his fore legs against the bars of his cage, and seeming to stretch almost over one's head in a great arch of animal beauty.

It is only in the noblest animals that this straining of the eyes into the distance is noticeable. You will not see it in the bear or the wolf or the hyena, and one feels therefore the less for their captivity. These baser brutes either stupidly assent to their imprisonment, objecting to it with but a sullen resistance as is the case with the bears, or fret and fuss under it without dignity as the vile hyena, or the meanly trotting wolf. But the lion looks out into such distance as is within his ken, as the great feline group, and one other race to be presently noted, alone *can* look. Indeed, it is no poetical fiction, no concession to conventionality, to call this creature the king of beasts. His dignity is too great to allow him to complain of that which he cannot help. He does not quarrel with his bars, but his life is one long protest against them. You have outwitted him, you have by superior numbers and by

cunning, entrapped and caught him, but he has lost nothing of his royalty by it. Lying down in weariness, but not fatigue, pacing backwards and forwards, or as has just been said standing erect and gazing out on the world of London, he is still the same, and seems to say like one who protested also against captivity of a different sort, 'Come, come; I AM A KING, my masters, know you that?'

There is another state prisoner in this place who has never yet made the best of his captivity, and who never will. It is the golden eagle. That straining of the gaze into the distance, which was spoken of a moment since as a marked peculiarity of the noble animals, is to be observed in this royal captive almost in a more distinguishing degree than in the lion. See this creature when his food is brought to him and flung into his cage. He does not even notice it. Perched on the highest attainable pinnacle of masonry within his reach at the top of his cage, with his back to the quarter from which the keeper approaches with his ready slaughtered prey, he gazes out into a farther distance than that within the lion's range of sight. What does he see? a paltry landscape of prim enclosure, an horizon clouded with smoke that lies over a town where many eyes are flashing more sharply than this eagle's, for they are quickened with the greed of gold. A poor prospect this for an eagle; yet he will gaze on it for half an hour together, revelling in this liberty of the eye which is the only freedom left to him, and neglecting the food which has been flung through his bars. What to him is this ready-slain flesh. He is not like his neighbours, the vultures, who desire nothing better than to have their prey killed for them. He would hunt it down and strike it for himself. Let the carrion lie there, he will fetch it when famine obliges him and not before. Surely the monarch of the birds is even a nobler captive than the king of beasts.

These wrinkly-necked and scavenger vultures proclaim, as most things do, their nature by their foul outside. How different are these from the eagles! The vulture is as large as the eagle. The stretch of its wings is as vast. It stands on

high pinnacles of rock as the other does, but it has not that steady, long-continuing gaze. It is a degraded, hungry, devouring monster, that hops and dances with joy when its barrow of flesh arrives, that tears the meat from the beak of the companion of his captivity, dropping its own portion to do so. The meat gets so covered with sand and gravel before these vultures have been long fighting for it, that you desire, as you look, to take it from them and wash it. It must be an awful thing to find oneself in a desert place surrounded by these brutes, and such an experience as that of Dr. Leith Adams must be a nasty one enough. It is worth quoting.

'After a bear or other large animal is killed in the Himalaya, the hunter soon finds himself surrounded by rapacious birds: where none were to be seen before, they are now observed dashing down the glens and sailing in circles round his quarry: some sweep within a few yards; others are soaring at higher elevations, and even at such vast altitudes that the huge bearded vulture appears only a small speck in the deep-blue heavens. But gradually it becomes more distinct, as its wide gyrations increase; it then gathers itself up, and closes its wings, to dash down in one fell swoop hundreds of feet, and the next minute is seen perched on the jutting rock beside him. Such are the usual circumstances attendant on the death of any large animal, and the hunter wonders whence all the vultures and carrion crows have come. But if he would direct his eye heavenwards immediately after his slaughtered ibex has rolled down the crag, he would probably observe carrion crows and vultures, at various distances and elevations, sailing leisurely about. The nearest bird marks the death of the quarry, and instantly begins to descend towards it. The others in succession make for the spot, following each other until the valley resounds with the hoarse croaking of the crows, and the air seems alive. The numbers which congregate on these occasions are absolutely surprising. I have seen no less than sixty vultures and crows around the carcase of a bear.'

There is something to be learnt from the collection in the Zoological Gardens. The melancholy Jaques was for ever twisting a moral out of the things he observed in nature. The sluggard is sent by Solomon to look at the industry of the ant, and we are taught also to unite the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. Who can look at these vultures tearing at each other's meat and dropping their own property in the attempt to snatch that of their neighbour—who can see this, and not be reminded of what he

has observed among certain human vultures, who will grasp and tear at some small legacy which has fallen to a brother vulture, who will spend their substance in trying to keep him out of it, who will mar and defile the coveted possession itself rather than let cousin-vulture, or nephew-vulture, or daughter-in-law-vulture possess it intact. Fight on, ye wry-necked herd, pluck at the prizes you desire so much, peck at each other to get them, wrinkle your skins, and make yourselves hideous in your thirst for gain, hop about that small property in impotent agonies of desire, but note the while that high above your head there stands a creature at first sight like yourselves, but in reality as widely removed as Hyperion from a satyr. Look up at your king, and look with fear. His plumes are smooth and there are no wrinkles in his neck. No lust of gain has lowered his head to be like yours, sunk in a high-shouldered stoop of greed. Why, look again. Such wares as you are fighting for in sordid struggle lie at the bottom of his small domain neglected and despised. He will come down to them when he must; but while he can he will still cry Excelsior, and press with eager longings against his prison bars. There are men like this; they are few and far between. The vultures, the apes, and the carrion crows outnumber them by thousands; but still there *are* eagles in the human world, and the vultures and the monkeys hate and fear them.

But if there is a lesson of industry in the ant that shall keep the teaching of the eagle from misleading us into a life of useless aspiration; if in the vulture there is a perpetual caution against a debased and sordid covetousness; there is in the building which our zoological teachers have set apart for the apes and monkeys—a perfect lecture-hall against the smaller villanies to which humanity is prone, a pillory of warning to the world. This is the head-quarters of fuss. As you stand and watch one of the inhabitants of this temple of irony—and in watching one you watch them all, for they are all alike—as you stand and observe him, you will be reminded every instant of the more fussy and important among

your friends and acquaintances. Mark how your monkey fidgets, how he hastens hither and thither always as it seems on important business, though it is only perhaps to fetch the flea out of his partner's ear, or to steal a hazle-nut from his friend. Mark how he wrinkles his brow and lifts his eye-brows, and looks about among his nut-shells, and among the hairs of his coat for nothing, for he is an impostor, and seldom finds even a flea. Your Eye-witness has been received by his friend Pumpcourt (whom he was foolish enough once to consult) with just such raising of the eye-brows, and P. would knock about the sham briefs upon his desk in hurried search for documents which he knew did not exist, exactly like this monkey. The ape looks towards the door when it opens with an expression which distinctly says, 'Is that the solicitor-general, because if it is I want to have a word with him.' In all these things this animal resembles Pumpcourt, and many more of your Servant's fussy friends. In holding out his hand (alas, it *is* a hand) for your contribution to his keep, but doing so with a wandering eye that is ever on the look out to see if there is anybody in the place better worth attending to, your monkey reminds you still of such members of your acquaintances as will talk to you till a richer and more successful man enters the room, from which moment their attention wanders, and they answer you at random. But there is no end to this: in irritable tempers speedily excited, in fury about nothing, in furtive cunning, in every low degrading and indecent gesture and practice, these creatures 'hold the mirror up' to all of us, and show the spectator of their hateful antics the things that he must most avoid. Indeed, this would almost seem the object of the monkey's existence; and while the nearness of his resemblance to the lower types of human physiognomy is terrible, and humbling in the last degree, it is consolatory to think that in proportion as a man *is* a man he is removed the more from this detested companion. The savage with his contracted brow, and the Indian with his vile cunning and mean beggary, *are* near enough to these monkeys to have satisfied Lord

Monboddo himself; and the Zoological Society, as if to prove this, and besides to make their collection complete, have got attached to the service of young Prince or Princess Hippopotamus, a 'native' who seems from a casual glance to have all the qualities of the ape in good development. He holds out his paw with grinning cries for halfpence to those who visit their department, and to ladies especially, grinning and staring at them in a way that very offensively carries out the resemblance that has been hinted above. Perhaps the members of this otherwise admirably conducted society are not aware of the proceedings of this one of their servants, and that a word of warning is very much required to prevent this swarthy gentleman from annoying the visitors to the gardens.

In commenting upon the manners of this apparently near relation of the monkeys, we have insensibly got through to the other side of the tunnel, and we may as well for the present stop there, for it is the very essence of sight-seeing to set at nought the classifications of guide-books, to take amusement, and instruction too, as it suggests itself, and to wander as one feels inclined from pillar to post, from the contemplation of a sea-anemone to that of a giraffe, and from the rat of the Thames to the hippopotamus of the Nile.

What length of acquaintance—what amount of familiarity ever diminishes one's surprise at the giraffe! Is there some mechanical teaching in its structure that has never been yet discovered? As your Eye-witness sits and writes, and remembers how one of these creatures could cram its head in at the second-floor window, he becomes lost in conjecture as to whether some great scheme of the adaptation of the giraffe to some useful purpose may not yet be developed. We have found out the use of the elephant; can nothing be done with the giraffe, the hugest and apparently the most meek of animals?

Blessings on the whole deer tribe—they are well represented here—with their great, soft, harmless eyes, and their wet and wholesome noses. Sweet-breathed, tame, and beautiful, they thrust their faces through the wooden bars, and

perfume the hand which they touch. They are even more innocent than the rabbits that live near the Superintendent's Office. Your Eye-witness found a group of these last little animals who were sttting all over and upon one of their number, and were eating their meal off his very back. There was something about this that irresistibly suggested the practice of the world when it meets to discuss the affairs of a brother who has failed or to chatter over a death, in both which cases the friends or executors will assemble there in not displeased convocation, and will lunch freely over the body or the bankrupt, as the case may be. What had that rabbit done to render himself subject to that discussion of his affairs in his presence? Had he becomc surety for a necessitous friend, had he made a love-match, or what had he done to be lunched over in this ignominious fashion?

These parrots, though a noisy race, so noisy in fact that it is impossible to spend many minutes in their society, are yet a jovial set. Very difficult it is to know where to have a parrot, still more a cockatoo. He will entwine himself about his perch, keeping his eye upon you and making overtures of peace, he will lean upon his beak and push himself along with all his weight upon it as if it was a skate, and presently he will turn upside down and eye you from beneath his perch, holding on by his gray and wrinkled claws. Emboldened by these little attentions, of which you are evidently the object, (the cockatoo has his eye upon you all the time)—emboldened and encouraged to fraternize with him by these concessions on his part, you advance a hand to caress him. In one instant—in less—this lowly, cautious, wheedling creature starts into a great white erect embodiment of rage, and screeches a yell of hatred into your very throat, performing volleys of indignant curtseyings the while, and revealing the dry interior of its gray mouth with a hideous gray hammer inside it which represents his tongue. They are wicked, crawling, topsy-turvy sinners these parrots, and are never to be trusted or dealt with as friends. They are humbugs too, and do not, as is the case with the three ravens who live out-

side, proclaim openly that they are demons of the wickedest order.

There is no disguise about a raven, who openly avows his disrelish for virtue to such an extent that he does not even care for his food till he has secreted it, buried it, made it appear a furtive act to get at it, and persuaded himself that he has stolen it. The three ravens who live behind the parrot-house are a dissipated trio, and will with every added year of life gain in that disreputableness of appearance which is one of their greatest sources of attraction.

It is strange that any one should have doubts about the reliableness of physiognomy as a science after a visit to the Zoological Gardens. What creature is there, in the whole collection, that does not proclaim his character at a glance, and that is not helpless against the revelations of his own exterior? Consider the mischief that is suggested by the appearance of a raven or a magpie, the insatiate desire for prey of the eagle, the debased malignity and cunning of the monkey. Look again at the horror that lurks in every fold of the rattle-snake or the puff-adder. It is absolutely terrible to stoop down near the glass and face one of these reptiles. How still it keeps, with its erect head, its fixed eyes, its forked tongue only slipping in and out in thirst for life! How horrible the identity of colour with the sand and earth on which it lies! The traveller, throwing himself down to rest, might put his hand upon this deadly asp, nor know that the beast was there till the poison was in his blood.

But if the more malignant and dangerous among animals are marked as being so by the external indications of their conformation and expression, it is equally certain that the soft eyes of the antelope tell a tale of equal truth, and that the low moaning of the dove, though appealing to a different sense, conveys to the ear an assurance of peace which the nature of the bird itself bears fully out. It is not wonderful that in man, possessed as he is of that subtle organism a face, we should be able to read character so well; but that this should be the case with animals, with only the rudiments of

a face, is really extraordinary. There is surely no one who can look at the seal in these gardens without almost a feeling of regard. The expression of its eyes is more intelligent and beautiful than that of any other creature—not excepting the elephant even—in the whole collection; and its action, as it hops along after its keeper and follows him when he leaves its enclosure, with its eyes, is almost affecting in its helplessness. So far from being surprised at what was taught to his deceased friend the Talking Fish, your Eye-witness wonders very much that its performances were not on a more remarkable scale of merit than they were.

But it is time to get to the event of the day—the salamander. The sea-anemones, the discontented-looking fresh-water fish, the little dapper water-fowl, and a hundred other attractive subjects on which to moralise and speculate, must be left undiscussed. There is no time even to enquire why it is that the polar bear amuses himself by walking backwards and waving his head from side to side as he looks up to the sky. There is no time to notice the little shy agouti, who runs out of his hole as you approach his cage and hastens down his little front garden to see who you are, and who, finding you are not the man he expected, trots back again as fast as he came out. There is no time for anything now but the salamander and the whale-headed storks: and first the salamander.

What does the world expect a salamander to be like? What did your Eye-witness anticipate when he hurried off to inspect this creature? Did he imagine that he should find an enormous furnace roaring and blazing in a cage of red-hot bars, and that standing aloof from this, and peering into the hottest and most central portion of the flames, he would there behold an enormous red monster, distantly resembling the griffin of heraldry, lifting its spined and bat-like wings and flapping them in burning joy over its head? Did he expect this? If perfect candour is to characterise the communications of the E. W., he must own that there was some *such thing* in his thoughts. The vile ancients are to blame

for this. They have described a creature 'that is bred from heat, that lives in the flames and feeds upon fire as its proper nourishment.' As they saw every other element, the air, the earth and the water inhabited, fancy was set to work to find or make an inhabitant in fire, and thus to people every part of nature. Those wretched ancients! As if an element could be inhabited that is only occasionally existent. What becomes of the animal whose natural element is fire, when the fire is extinguished? Does a new salamander spring into existence every time a fire is lighted? and what becomes of the familiar salamander of your Eye-witness when Thirza, the housemaid, lets his bed-room fire out? These same ancients (whom, by-the-by, everything proves to have been arrant liars) have called the salamander 'the daughter of fire, giving it, however, a body of ice.' This was the salamander of the ancients, of the classics, and, if the truth must be told, of the Eye-witness.

Let us turn from it to the salamander of the nineteenth century, and of the Zoological Gardens. A tank in a dark corner is substituted for the cage with the red-hot bars, while the furnace is represented by an element which, however satisfactory in itself, is something of a surprise when you have expected a fire—in a word, the tank is full of water!

It is full also of eels; of little eels and trumpery minnows or small gudgeons, which are swimming about apparently in discomfort, for they keep very near the surface, and some of them are turning up their little white stomachs in the agonies of death. This was all that your Servant saw except that in the darkest corner of the tank, and under a ledge, there appeared to be a sort of eft, or lizard, of enormous size, brown, bloated, and hideous.

Your Eye-witness was on the point of deserting the tank as a thing which did not concern him, when the words 'Gigantic Salamander' at the head of a printed paper affixed to it arrested his attention, and caused him once more to examine the contents of the cistern with an increased and more careful scrutiny. Unable to make out anything more than he

had seen at first, your Servant was just coming to the conclusion that the salamander had blazed himself out of the gardens altogether, leaving his descriptive notice behind him, when a sudden thought struck him, and struck him so hard that it almost took his breath away—'Perhaps it's the eft!' said the Eye-witness.

Everything went to prove that it was so. The fact that the animal was in the water when it ought to have been in the fire, that it had secreted itself, as every exhibited animal does, in the most inscrutable part of its den, that it refused to give any token of life whatever, that it was in no respect what it was expected to be—all these things were convincing proofs that the bloated and abhorrent eft was what the printed paper announced, the Gigantic Salamander, the Sieboldia Maxima of Japan.

'This animal,' the descriptive notice goes on to say, 'is the largest specimen of the true amphibious known to exist: . . . it is the nearest living analogue of the fossil salamander, of the tertiary fresh-water formation of Œningen, described by Scheuchzer as a fossil man (Homo diluvii testis), and since called Andreas Scheuchzeri.'

Against the earlier and more scientific portion of this description your Servant has nothing to say: he has no objection to make to the announcement that this noisome animal is of 'the tertiary fresh-water formation of Œningen,' because he has not the remotest idea what that is. To all this sort of thing he is ready to agree; but against the notion of the 'fossil man,' as a term under any circumstances applicable to this huge and bloated eft, he desires to take instant and indignant exception. If Andreas Scheuchzer could get nothing nearer to a fossil man than this, he had better have left the subject alone; if this is all he knows about such matters, we should strongly recommend him to take at once to some other line than the zoological, and to set up promptly —supposing he is alive—in the Photographic business or the South African wine trade.

The fossil man of our Andrew is a creature about two feet

in its extreme length, from the end of its most appalling snout to the extremity of its hideous tail. It is a crawling dragon—it is an exaggerated eft—it is a pestiferous and appalling lizard—it is a soft and dwarfish crocodile. What is it not that is unclean and fearful? From end to end it is covered, and on its huge and flattened head especially, with blotchy manginess of a diseased and mouldy order. And this is your notion, Andrew, of a fossil man, is it? Oh! Andrew, Andrew, better hadst thou stuck to the delusion of the ancients, and remained satisfied with their fiery fiction, than have sought to claim for this scurril beast the distinction of the fossil man!

But this salamander is the culminating point of all delusions, and of none more obviously than that which the Zoological Society seem to have entertained with regard to its appetite. In their hospitality towards the stranger, this body has filled his tank with little fishes, even to overflowing; yet we read in Goldsmith of a specimen of this tribe which lived eight months without taking any nourishment whatever. 'Indeed,' the writer adds, 'as many of this kind are torpid or nearly so during the winter, the loss of their appetite for so long a time is the less surprising.'

There never was a worse shot made, than attributing any fiery properties to the salamander. It appears to be one of the dampest, and—if the expression is allowable—one of the sloppiest animals that exists at all. 'Salamanders,' says Buffon, 'are fond of *cold damp places*, thick shades, tufted woods, and high mountains, and the banks of streams that run through meadows; it is commonly only when rain is about to fall that it comes forth from its secret asylum, as if by a kind of necessity to bathe itself, and to imbibe *an element to which it is analogous*.'

Certainly, this is a delusive beast. 'The moderns,' Buffon continues, 'have followed the ridiculous tales of the ancients; and as it is difficult to stop when once the bounds of probability are passed, some have gone so far as to think that the most violent fire could be extinguished by the land sala-

mander. Quacks sold this small lizard, affirming that if thrown into the greatest conflagration, it would check its progress.' The unhappy beast too has been in this respect the subject of many experiments, and because when it was thrown into the fire it was seen to burst and to eject its natural fluids in doing so, the Philosophical Transactions—with whose compilers we would rather by-the-by after this specimen have philosophical transactions than business ones—the Philosophical Transactions tell us that this is the method taken by the animal to extinguish the flames.

So much for the salamander—the largest and ugliest lizard that ever was seen, and in that capacity, and as a zoological curiosity, well worth going to see. It is not fair, however, to call him a salamander. In that capacity he is an impostor, and it would be more humane towards a credulous public to let him figure in the advertisements, simply as the Sieboldia Maxima, since called Andreas Scheuchzeri; a name which, assisted by a sneeze, will slip out of the mouth—and out of the memory—with equal facility.

The despairing visitor to the gardens, who is fresh from a contemplation of that heap of straw, arranged thatch-wise, which is called the apteryx, will probably expect to derive a similar amount of amusement from a visit to the newly arrived birds—the whale-headed storks or balæniceps, whose addition to the collection used to be advertised in the different public prints. Your Eye-witness is always prepared for a heap of straw, or a blanket—and nothing else—when there is any new animal at the Zoological Gardens about which public curiosity is much excited. Has anybody ever seen the apteryx which has been so much talked about? Your Servant has friends who declare that they have examined this animal carefully, and who will go into particulars in their description of it. But are these friends to be trusted? Your Eye-witness owns at once that he has never seen this extraordinary wingless bird. He has frequently seen its cage. He has read its label. He has gazed through the bars, and studied minutely every fibre of the neatly arranged straw in one

corner of the den, but this is all. Under that straw there may or may not be an apteryx. It must be acknowledged that a heap of straw affords as little delight to a keen sight-seer, as perhaps anything that can be mentioned, yet this or a blanket is pretty generally all that your Servant is allowed to see of those zoological specimens, concerning which his curiosity has been the most powerfully stimulated. A heap of straw, or a blanket, or an empty cage, with what you took at first to be a larger pebble than usual in the sand, but which turns out to be the animal you are in search of—these are gratifications to which your Servant is so accustomed, that when he came to the cage to which he was directed as the abode of the whale-headed storks, he was no way surprised to see simply an inner cage, entirely concealed behind a straw-blind, and nothing else.

'This is as it should be,' said your E. W., when a friendly looking keeper coming up with a bunch of keys in his hand, and seeing your Servant staring through the bars, asked him if he would like to go in and have a look at him.

With the exception of Livermore, who is always sick, and Chopfall, whose wife's mother lives in the house with him—with these exceptions, the two birds which your Eye-witness discovered when he peeped behind the straw blind just mentioned were the most melancholy living creatures he had ever beheld. Weak in the legs—the limbs of one of the two specimens had doubled up under him like elbows, or knees turned the wrong way—over-weighted in the bill, bald in the head, small and despairing in the eye, and shut in behind an eclipse of straw, the whale-headed stork is not an exhilarating subject of contemplation. The keeper who showed them sighed as he did so, and said 'they had not been there long,' as an excuse for their depression.

But why whale-headed? Here is another fraud upon the public. Are whales possessed of enormous bills that weigh them down, and pull them forward to the earth. Have whales got bald flesh-coloured fluffy heads, the back view of which is similar to that—your E. W. speaks with awe—of the late

Duke of Cambridge. If such are the characteristics of whales, then has your Servant been all his life deluded by wicked picture-books, which have represented the whale without any of these remarkable and interesting features. Perhaps it is so. Your Eye-witness is beginning to regard zoology as a wicked and deluding science, and is rapidly getting to such a mistrustful condition of mind with regard to it, that it is a matter of positive surprise to him to find that a zebra is really striped, and that there are spots on a leopard after all. Your Eye-witness gazed long and with affectionate sympathy at the two birds on whose privacy he had intruded. They were too melancholy to take the slightest notice of him, and the specimen which had sunk down on its elbows, was lost in astonished contemplation of its companion who still managed to keep erect, a circumstance which really did seem, considering its legs and their obvious readiness to double up, no less creditable than it was surprising.

'They seem a little dull,' said your Eye-witness, as he took his leave.

'You see, sir,' said the man, once more sighing heavily as he spoke—'you see, sir, they're only just come.'

If this is the only look out; if a more prolonged residence in these gardens is all that is looked forward to as a means of fetching up the spirits of these unhappy animals, then is their prospect indeed a bad one, the perpetual contemplation of a straw blind being an occupation the reverse of hilarious, and not calculated to take the mind of the animal off the reflection that he has got that enormous bill to support, and has nothing at all to do with it.

The house of the balæniceps is not far from the enclosure devoted to the grand group of the weird and pale-eyed pelicans; and these again are not far from the gate of the gardens. Your Eye-witness looked once again from the terrace heights as he was about to leave, towards the eagle's aviary. The eagle, the cognizance of Imperial France, was still where he had seen him hours before, and mounted on the highest pinnacle within his reach, was straining his eyes into the dis-

tance. What was he gazing at? Was he trying to read his master's policy, and to discover over what country next he will be bidden to hover with his outstretched wings. It will take keen eyes to do that? Your master's policy, oh imperial eagle! is not known till its results are accomplished facts. There are other eyes than yours at work to discern it. They are practised eyes, far-sighted and strong, but they look in vain. The lion looks out as the eagle does, but his range of view is not so long, nor his passion for prey so insatiate and cruel.

XI.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE FITNESS OF WOMAN TO EXERCISE THE PROFESSION AND CALLING OF A HORSE-TAMER.

WHAT *have* we been about all our lives? We have been, and especially lately, constantly engaged in twisting and turning the great question of female occupation and its legitimate developments, and all the time we have been losing sight entirely of the real obvious source of employment for women which nature and propriety and everything else—if there is anything else—unmistakably point at.

Nay, what have women themselves been about? They have been trying in all conceivable and inconceivable ways to discover new means of getting a living. They have been assembling in clubs to discuss the best method of subjugating the male sex, and generally putting it down, by cutting our sources of employment away from under us. They have been taking degrees of M.D. They have been setting up in business as printers, and—not confining themselves to writing books and making speeches—have determined to print them themselves, and to that end have set up printing offices worked by bands of lady-compositors; and a newspaper in which the rights of the sex are especially vindicated. These have been some of the proceedings of the more strong-minded among our female reformers, while the weaker

members of this ill-used race have not ventured to aspire beyond flower-painting, petticoat embroidering, and the different functions connected with tuition. Now, would anybody believe that all this time the true channel into which the vast stream of female labour ought to be turned has remained undiscovered, and that the express purpose for which women were sent into the world, and for which their nature, their habits, their bodily frames, and everything else has adapted them, has been up to this moment a secret to the world, but a secret which in this happy year 1860, it has been the glorious lot of the distinguished MISS ASHTON of Matlock, Derbyshire, to disclose to an astonished and admiringe age!

And what is this secret? It is, in one word, or rather in two words joined together with a hyphen, HORSE-BREAKING! Now, let us ask once more how it is that this most obvious source of female occupation has never suggested itself before? How is it that any man could look at any woman, or that any woman could look at any *other* woman, and not at once see, without taking a moment to consider it, that horse-breaking is her mission? Consider the qualifications for this 'line of business,' with which in her mental and bodily construction nature has endowed her. Consider her habits, her costume—the last particularly—and see how it lends itself, especially in this age of hoops, to the rapid changes of position, the general activity and alertness which this new profession requires; and how admirably adapted it is to that daring 'act' of vaulting on to the back of the finally subdued animal, of which our lady-novelists are so fond. A lady will be able in accomplishing this act to jump through one of her own hoops as she does so, and thus combining equestration with horse-taming, will leave nothing to be desired any more for ever.

It is certain that the advertisement inserted by Miss Ashton in the newspapers was one admirably calculated to stimulate the curiosity of all ingenuous and simple minded persons in no ordinary degree; whilst to those of a different habit of mind it might be that many ungenerous and un-

handsome suspicions would present themselves in connection with the promised exhibition. To the last-named class—and the writer is sorry to say that he is included in it—to such persons, rendered hopeless by many failures, and incredulous by countless delusions, the subject would show itself in a different light, and the subjoined promises would savour of mockery and despair.

'Miss Ashton had the distinguished honour of experimenting in her Majesty's private riding-school at Buckingham Palace, on Saturday, March 3rd, 1860. The subjects upon which she practised were two wild unbroken colts fresh from grass, never previously handled or even seen by her, which, in the space of a few minutes, she cast single-handed, and fondled with them on the ground as if they were pet spaniels.

'The subjects selected for the display of her astonishing powers at the Alhambra Palace are two unbroken three-year-old colts, a wild Exmoor pony, and a hybrid animal, recently found in the New Forest, Hampshire, said to combine the species of the horse with that of the red deer.

'Miss Ashton is the daughter of the late Mr. John Ashton, of Oaker End Farm, near Matlock, Derbyshire. She is only eighteen years of age, but from her childhood she has always shown a remarkable fondness for horses.

'She will be accompanied by the original horse-tamer, Mr. James Telfer, from Anton Hill, Northumberland, who has made arrangements for securing the most vicious horse that can be found in London or vicinity; and although near upon sixty years of age, he will guarantee to produce the same results with more ease to himself and his subjects than does Mr. Rarey, who, he is prepared to prove, is *not* the *discoverer* of this system of horse-taming, as alleged by him; in fact, that it is not an *American* discovery at all.'

Without pausing to comment on the account contained in this programme of Miss Ashton's already achieved exploits, in tackling under the eye of Majesty itself, two wild colts, whose extraordinary diet had consisted of 'grass, never previously handled or even seen by her, which (the grass obviously) in the space of a few minutes she cast single-handed.' Without pausing to note these glories of the past, your Eye-witness is free to own that looking on to the future, many feelings of dark and cruel mistrust assailed him. Suppose it should be a mere circus affair after all. Suppose the farmer's daughter should be an old established performer on horseback. Suppose the unbroken colts should be personated by a couple of those cream-coloured old stagers with

the pink eyes and noses, who have been 'on' at Astley's, and are so up to everything connected with the profession, that one feels convinced that the manager consults them as to his arrangements, and as to the route for the next provincial tour. Suppose a couple of these old sinners should trot into the arena, giving themselves youthful airs for a few minutes, and then suddenly becoming tame when the performer whispered in their ears that the effective moment had come for giving in. The thought of the possibility of those flesh-coloured animals capering about the arena, and smiling as they thought what a 'do' it was, haunted your Eye-witness like a nightmare from the moment of his purchasing his ticket of admission. The hybrid animal, too! was this calculated to inspire confidence? one of the old-stagers again, doubtless, painted or clipped, or pinned down, or stuffed up, in some way, to look like a red-deer. Pooh! there's nothing those horses can't do with themselves. All these reflections, then, haunted the mind of your miserable Servant, and he would have gladly taken five shillings for his ten-and-sixpenny ticket, if he could have got it, the next day after its purchase.

The audience assembled in the Alhambra was necessarily a small one, the tickets being a guinea and half a guinea each: it was also a very mysterious one. Your Eye-witness never felt any conviction more strongly in his life than that this audience was not money. How could it be? Besides, it knew the performers, the knowing men who were backwards and forwards between the stables and the arena; it knew the performers, this audience, and talked to them, leaning over the edges of compartments to do so. Did the friends of those knowing men in boots pay one guinea each for their tickets? Never believe it. Besides, the guinea places were better filled than the half-guinea, and not a jot better. It was proving too much.

The passage or gully which leads from the arena to the stables is always a good place for the visitor to a circus to approximate himself to, and it was next to this means of *access* to the 'behind the scenes' that your Eye-witness

placed himself, and from this post he could watch the proceedings of the knowing men in boots, and of the other professionals. Now there is one especial character of whom on all these occasions your Servant has a marked dread, it is the *Entrepreneur*, the man who 'works' the exhibition for the performers. Your Eye-witness met once with such a personage when examining the manœuvres of a certain Infant-Magnet, as the reader may possibly remember. He is always a dark man, always more or less greasy as to his hair, is always dressed in black, always ready to be impudent on an emergency, always shaved close, with the exception of his upper lip, and always innocent, having never assisted at anything of this kind before, and never having seen the performers till the day before yesterday. Of this inevitable personage your Eye-witness has then a great dread and apprehension, and when at the hour appointed for the commencement of the exhibition this individual stepped into the arena, your Servant gave himself up for lost.

'They had had a disappointment,' the Inevitable began by saying. Of course they had. Mr. Telfer (who it will be remembered was announced in the programme as having '*made* arrangements for securing the most vicious horse that can be found in London or vicinity')—Mr. Telfer had deeply to deplore the fact that there was no such thing as a vicious horse to be had. So this being the case what had this ingenious gentleman done? He had gone off to Newgate Market, and hired A BULL to try his experiments upon; and his subjugation of this animal would immediately succeed the performance of Miss Ashton.' The Inevitable went on to say that he would shortly have the honour of introducing that young lady, whom he had only met with yesterday. —your Eye-witness groaned softly at this point—but the rumour of whose exploits had reached him; but before he did so he wished to say a few words upon the nature of that noble animal (he might say the noblest of all animals) the horse! Becoming eloquent upon this theme the Inevitable would doubtless have favoured his audience at considerable

length had he not been interrupted by *the* member of the audience who had paid, and who now cried out 'Question' in so loud a tone that the lecture was brought to an untimely close, and Miss Ashton was promptly introduced.

It was the opinion of your Eye-witness that Miss Ashton, the Female Horse-Tamer, though not wholly destitute of a circus flavour, was yet a genuine person. For the prosecution—supposing this young lady was being tried as to whether she had or had not any connexion with the circus-world—for the prosecution it might be urged that the wave of the hand which accompanied her acknowledgment of every little indication of applause was similar to that made use of by 'professionals' at the conclusion of an 'act,' and it might also be said that the red net or cap into which her hair was gathered was a little like a 'property,' and that a similar criticism would apply to the beautiful blue satin trousers—so to speak—which appeared below her short brown-holland dress, and which were trimmed becomingly enough with black lace. This was the case for the prosecution. For the defence it may be urged that there was something about the build of the young lady's figure, the shape of her waist, and the wholesome redness of her powerful arms, very untheatrical, that the same may be said of the tightly-laced high-lows in which her feet and ancles were encased, and that the suggestive curtsey and the laced unmentionables may simply have been assumed out of a mistaken idea of what the public might expect. Altogether the young lady seems entitled to her verdict.

As to the horses to be tamed nothing could exceed their docility. Though not the old public servants which the Eye-witness half expected to see, they yet, as your E. W. could observe from where he sat, betrayed a familiarity with the sound of their own hoofs on the boards as they trotted up the wooden platform, which was dimly suggestive of previous first-appearances. If, however, they really were unbroken colts, it must be acknowledged that their behaviour was highly creditable to them. The phenomena of the

taming was not striking, and as the animals were so alike in their manners as to provoke the idea that they were near relatives one description will do for both.

The unbroken colt, bitted, bridled, and haltered, was led into the arena, which was thickly covered with straw, by Mr. Telfer, a powerful, middle-aged north-countryman. The animal was held by this gentleman while Miss Ashton got a strap round his near fore-leg, and passed the same through the girth which was round the horse's body. It is an old story—we are told now that this practice of strapping up a leg has long been known to our horse-breakers and circus-riders, and that they did not choose to make it public, lest it should detract from their merits. This may be so or it may not; at any rate this was the plan adopted by Miss Ashton. As soon as the creature was thus disabled she was left to finish him by herself. It was soon done. When the poor beast had hobbled a few yards in this three-legged fashion the young lady, getting another strap round his other fore-leg, lugged away at it till the animal was at last pulled off his legs and fell heavily on the straw. This is not much. To fasten straps round the fetlocks of an animal who stands perfectly quiet, to pull and lug at these straps till he tumbles down upon his knees, to push him over on his side, and (still keeping his legs doubled under him with the straps) to take a seat upon his body, these are exploits the like of which we could most of us perform if Mr. Telfer would hold the animal's head during the earlier stages of the proceedings, and if during the later ones the unbroken horse would promise to behave himself as well as those operated on by Miss Ashton. Let us now get to the hybrid.

If every chestnut pony who happens to have thin legs and rather a pointed nose is to set up in business instantly as a hybrid, what is to become of us? If your Eye-witness had met that friend of his who keeps a chaise driving the hybrid IN that chaise, the E. W. would have said to his friend, 'Friend, that is a pretty pony; what delicate legs it has got!' Going a little nearer he would have added, 'Surely

those legs have been clipped, or singed, or something to get all the hair off.' Going nearer yet, he might probably have exclaimed, 'Why surely besides clipping his legs they have pared away his hoofs, which are both small and pointed.' This is all the impression the animal in question—which from the description your Eye-witness was almost afraid to look at—would heve made, even if it did that. Truly if the New Forest can't turn out anything better than this in the way of a hybrid, the sooner it shuts up shop in that line the better. This unhappy animal gave in so soon to Miss Ashton's views that she was obliged to pull and tug at its mouth in an unmerciful manner to get it to make even a show of resistance. With the taming of this tremendous animal the young lady's share in the entertainment terminated, and she abandoned the arena to Mr. Telfer and the bull.

Throughout the whole of this young lady's performance a conversation conducted in a style of light and easy pleasantry was kept up at intervals between *the* man who had paid for his seat and the inevitable gentleman who had 'become acquainted with the performers yesterday,'—the gentleman who had paid for his seat making loud remarks upon what went on, and the Inevitable parrying his thrusts as best he might. Besides crying 'Question' whenever the professional gentleman wandered from the matter in hand, the man who had paid for his seat would disparage the entertainment on every occasion when he had a chance, inquiring when the unbroken colts had last been fed—they had a lean and hungry look certainly—whether the hybrid's hoofs were cloven, and other questions of the like harassing and aggravating nature.

There was nothing to laugh at when the bull made his appearance in the circus, and yet everybody laughed. The beast was followed by Mr. Telfer, and—it was something at any rate to be in good company—by the slaughterer of Newgate Market. The bull proved an unsatisfactory substitute for the vicious horse promised in the programme; indeed, the performing bull itself was not more tame and quiet than this new importation, which took the Alhambra and the com-

pany as easy as if it had been born there. He had not the slightest objection to being strapped up, but so strong an objection to being pulled down that all the tamer's efforts to accomplish this object seemed for some time likely to fail. The man who had paid for his place having expended his whole stock of venom in some deadly sarcasms (on the nature of his occupation) levelled at the head of the slaughterer, having finally addressed this public functionary as 'Calcraft,' and asked him why in that capacity he did not go and put the bull out of his misery,—this gentleman at last got up to go, and was followed by the greater part of the audience. After his departure the idea suddenly suggested itself to Mr. Telfer that if he fastened up the fore and hind-leg of the bull on the same side and then made a run at him he must infallibly go over. This ingenious device was wholly successful, and so this astounding exhibition came to an end, Calcraft riding out of the arena on the back of his prey.

Out of all this inconceivable and unprecedented jumble of hybrids, bulls, and female horse-tamers, it is pleasant to have gained at any rate an undoubted confirmation of the glorious principle with which we started. The great object the E. W. in visiting the exhibition of the Tamer was to obtain the means of proving that a vast and profitable field of female labour was lying unexplored, and the wealth contained in it unappropriated. Surely this has been done. This 'light and profitable employment,' as our advertisements phrase it, is now open to all who choose to avail themselves of it, and the writer would strongly urge those young ladies who are in search of occupation to turn their attention at once in this direction. There is everything in favour of their attractive enterprise. It does not involve confinement —advertisement again—it requires no capital, the stock in trade is small—a couple of straps and a pair of blue satin unmentionables trimmed with black lace, being all that it seems necessary to possess to start in life as a Tamer. The Eye-witness is particular as to the latter portion of the stock in trade, because he believes that they are an important ele-

ment in taming, and that any young person who rushed into 'the profession' without these decorations would come to some untimely end. With them—and what parent would be so hard-hearted as to refuse to set his daughter up in life on such economical terms?—with them all is safe. She starts in life with her little bundle containing (like that of Slawkenbergius' stranger) these invaluable garments, and everything is before her. As the writer thinks of the prospect that thus opens before his young friends, as he thinks of the number of other light employments adapted to the sex which this will suggest—lamplighting and the prize-ring at once present themselves to the mind as coming within the category—as he thinks of these things, he feels that he has not given his support to the Tamer in vain, and that even the man who paid for his place may console himself with the reflection that his money has been sacrificed in a great and noble cause.

XII.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE CONVERSATION AND PERFORMANCES OF A GREAT AND GOODLY SEAL, WHICH WENT BY NAME OF THE TALKING FISH.

THE Talking Fish would have been so called with perfect propriety, but for two circumstances—it was *not* a fish, and it did *not* talk. In the course of the nine days appropriated to this wonder, no one appears to have noticed this little error in description. Under these circumstances, the Eye-witness is mistrustful of himself. Is he labouring under some strange delusion? Is a seal a fish? Is barking like a dog, talking?

Perhaps it is; perhaps this animal was not exhibited in Piccadilly; perhaps Piccadilly is not Piccadilly but Pall Mall; perhaps there is no equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington on Constitution Hill; perhaps it is easy to dance with ladies who wear hoops; perhaps they don't wear them at all; perhaps your Eye-witness has a large fortune; *perhaps* there is not a tree outside his bed-room window, and

a sparrow watching him from its branches as he writes; perhaps the French alliance is a sound one; perhaps the Emperor of the French is unaffectedly fond of England; perhaps it is easy to cross over at the Regent Circus, Oxford Street; perhaps the leg of a fowl is your Eye-witness's favourite morsel; perhaps he doesn't tell a story when he says it is; perhaps it is pleasant to have a ball given next door; perhaps there is no humbug in advertisements; perhaps—perhaps a barking seal is a Talking Fish.

When your Eye-witness entered the room in which the Talking Fish was exhibited, and when he saw it lying at the bottom of its tub, he was struck first of all by the creature's eyes, by their intelligence, their soft beauty, and by the glance of helpless appeal which it directed from one to the other of the faces by which it was surrounded. This was what struck him first. Then it struck him that if convenient, he should like to have a large ship ready in the Pool of London to convey the Talking Fish back to the coast of Africa, from which it had been brought; then it struck him that, as this was perhaps *not* convenient, he should like to have a rifle loaded with ball, with full liberty to discharge the same at the head of the poor seal, and so put her out of her misery at once and for all. There appearing to be obstacles connected with the laws of property to even so rational a scheme as this, it next struck him that he should like to strangle every person concerned in bringing the Talking Fish to this country. These different inclinations having passed through the head of your Eye-witness, and their appearing to be obstacles to the gratification of every one of them, it occurred to him next to resign himself to circumstances, to look about him, and see what was going on.

Nothing was going on. A large seal was lying at the bottom of an immense tub, round which about twenty persons were standing with their mouths open, wondering when the performance was to begin. The seal appeared to be almost in a torpid state, except when, as has been described above, it

turned from time to time its languid eyes to the faces round the bath, looking from one to another with vexed perplexity. It uttered too, at intervals, a sharp and painful cry, which was accompanied by a snapping sound occasioned probably by the meeting of its teeth. A fat man, whom your Witness liked, who spoke kindly to the seal; a man like a foreign ambassador or Royal Duke, whom your Witness disliked, who spoke savagely to the seal; and a faint-hearted man, whom your Witness regarded in a negative light, who spoke idiotically to the seal,—seemed all to have a share in exhibiting the animal, and all tried in their different ways to make the poor beast exert itself.

It has been said that the seal uttered now and then a cry like a bark. This was only at intervals at first; but when the Royal Duke, mounting on a 'coign of vantage,' commenced a scientific lecture on the animal which was, he said, to be 'the subject of a few remarks,' the seal took to barking violently and frequently, and at last never left off at all, taking it evidently as an insult that it should be lectured upon, and determining that not a word that was said about its nature and habits should reach the public. The Talking Fish not only declined to talk itself, but was an enemy to talkativeness in others.

'The extraordinary animal,' the lecturer began, 'the extraordinary animal—bow-wow—subject of the present exhibition—bow-wow, bow-wow—on the coast of Africa—bow-wow—mouth of the—bow-wow—river—bow-wow, bow-wow—disputed point—bow-wow—naturalists—bow-wow—indeed Professor—bow-wow—expresses himself to this effect—bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow—while that eminent comparative anatomist, Dr.—bow-wow—in treating on this subject—bow-wow, bow-wow—in his work on the function of—bow-wow—has been understood to say—bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow—

This was all that was audible of the lecture, the rest was lost in an uninterrupted volley of barking of the loudest and *most* overpowering description. The Royal Duke descended

from his bad eminence in evident disgust, and saying to the faint-hearted man, 'see what you can do with her,' proceeded to look moodily on as if he were a spectator from outside, and to lash with many taunts the faint-hearted man, who for his part had evidently no hope of the seal from the beginning. The Talking Fish, it must be mentioned, was a female Talking Fish, and her name it seemed was Jenny.

'Will um's Jenny come and kiss um's hand?' said the faint-hearted man, leaning over the tub to address the seal. 'No, of course she won't,' he added, when the seal declined the invitation with a bark of disgust, 'I knew she wouldn't.'

'You've got no perseverance,' said the Royal Duke, 'why don't you go on at her till she does?'

'Much better leave her alone,' said the fat man. 'Poor Jenny,' he continued, stooping over the bath. The seal rose up out of the water, and lifting up her face kissed him as he uttered the words. 'Poor Jenny,' said the fat man, 'have they been beating you, Jenny?'

Had they? Why did Jenny wince when the Royal Duke happened to wave his hand, why did she wince, and shrinking away to the other end of the bath look again from face to face in mute but strong appeal. Poor Jenny!

'Try her again,' said the Royal Duke to the faint-hearted man.

'What's the good?' answered that despondent gentleman.

'Never mind asking, "what's the good,"' retorted the Royal Potentate; 'but try her again.'

The gentleman who according to the proverb was disqualified for the winning of fair ladies *did* try her again.

'Um's Jenny's naughty lickle girl not to kiss um's hand—come zen, kiss um's hand,' said the faint-hearted man. 'There,' he continued, when this appeal proved no more successful than the last—'there, what did I tell you? Are you justified now?'

'No,' said the Royal Duke, 'I'm not. Try showing her some fish.'

'Give um's Jenny *pretty lickle* fish, if um's Jenny 'll kiss

um's hand,' said the faint-hearted man, showing a highly flavoured flounder to the unfortunate animal.

The Talking Fish knowing it would not get the flounder, or perhaps not liking the smell of it, remained stationary at the other end of the bath, and sure enough the flounder was taken away again and put into a basket whose perfume was not agreeable.

'Oh, hang it,' the fat man interposed, 'don't break faith with a fellow—with a fish, I mean—like that, if you show it to her give it to her—what's the good of tantalising her like that?'

'What's the good of any think?' said the despondent man. This was one of those propositions of a general nature which nobody present seemed capable of grappling with, so the faint-hearted man went on. 'When she says she won't do a thing she won't.'

'You've no perseverance,' said the Royal Duke, 'try her again.

'Try her yourself,' retorted the faint-hearted man.

'Come here, Jenny,' said the Royal Duke in a fierce tone. The seal came across the bath to where he stood, looked timidly up at him and slunk away to the other end of the tank.

Such was the exhibition at which your Eye-witness assisted with a heavy heart. Sometimes the regal-looking personage dragging the seal about by the skin of its back, and pushing it violently across the bath would force it almost into the mouth of the faint-hearted man, who was the chief exhibitor. On these occasions she would in desperation raise her head and breast out of the water, and put her lips to his mouth. Sometimes she would half present him with a fin. But where was the talking? Was this the animal for whose feats of dialogue the public had been prepared by a placard, stuck on every dead wall in London, representing a British sailor in earnest conversation, not to say argument, with an enormous codfish standing upright upon the tip of its tail? Was *this all?*

No, this was not all. To the eye of your Witness there was exhibited the heart of that poor seal. He read it through her eyes, and in it read a tale of sorrow that made his own heart sad, and caused him for a moment reverently to hope that even for the sufferings of the brute creation, there may be some compensating good in store. He hoped this as far as might consist with reverence, and it comforted him; for the eyes of that seal, their expression, and the capability of feeling which they seemed to indicate, haunted him as he left the place, and are before him now while he writes.

There was exhibited, not many years ago, at the Royal Academy, a picture by Sir Edwin Landseer, which was received somewhat unmercifully, and which yet—besides possessing many pictorial beauties of a high grade—was in its dim suggestion of a hope, that even the lower animals are not wholly excluded from a share in the scheme of heaven's mercy, very beautiful. It was the work of one who, as has been said, suggests this rather than asserts it. The minds of those who feel deeply will at times stretch forward thus in a strong sympathy with the sufferings of creation, and will strain to get a glimpse beyond that glass through which we see so darkly.

And yet this picture which represented an angel ministering to a dying stag or deer, was received by many almost with ridicule. The public is not grateful to those persons who spend their lives in purveying to its amusement and gratification. It is ever ready to note, with gleeful briskness of detection, the failing powers, or the mistakes of an old favourite, nay, sometimes to detect these things with such extraordinary keenness, that, as in the case just mentioned, it finds them out before they exist.

The Talking Fish then declined to talk. And yet to your Eye-witness she *did* talk, and oh, how plainly! How plainly, as she worked herself round and round and looked from face to face, how plainly she spoke, not with her mouth indeed, but with her wistful eyes.

'What have I done?' she said, 'what have I done, that

this misery should have come upon me? What is this close and stifling room? What are these faces that gaze at me in my prison? Why am I here? Where is the sea that used to stretch around me farther than my eyes could follow? Where the mighty river at whose mouth I lived? Where the sun in which I loved to bask? Where is my mate? They have taken him from me and killed him. Oh that they would kill me as they did my mate, and deliver me though it were by death from this dreadful place! Why have they brought me here, helpless as I am? What have I done?—what have I done?'

XIII.

HIS EVIDENCE CONCERNING THE SKILL AND DOCILITY OF A LITTLE LEARNED BULL.

'SHE'S coming out!' screamed the smallest boy with the whitest face, the most beet-rooty nose, the thinnest blouse, and the most precocious intellect ever seen or heard of.

He was perched upon the spikes of the railings which separate No. — Castle Street from the back entrance or stage-door of the Alhambra Circus. From this place of security it was his hint to speak, in the words just quoted, to a young friend in a red comforter, stationed immediately beneath him, who but for the boy on the spikes would have looked skinny and small too. But the boy on the spikes exhausted the subject of skinniness, just as his nose exhausted that of redness,—for ever.

'*She's* coming out!' squeaked the impaled boy again, with a noble disregard of gender.

For it was the performing bull to which the infant on the spikes thus alluded; and it was outside the private residence of this animal that a little crowd had assembled, with that keen appreciation of eleemosynary sights which is one of the most remarkable characteristics of our race. They were there to see him come out for an airing.

There is always a certain interest attached to the private

life of great public characters, so your Eye-witness, who happened to be passing, stopped and joined the little knot of spectators, thinking that he too would like to see this performer emerge from his lodgings. His carriage was waiting for him at the door, and the E. W. was soon in possession of a very commanding place in a front row.

It was a curious circumstance in connexion with this particular assembly that its members manifested a courtesy in reference to their ready resignation of these same front places, which the E. W. never remembers to have noticed before, except on one occasion, when he found himself in a crowd outside the door of a certain public-house in which it was rumoured that a prize-fighter had suddenly gone mad. There was the same readiness to accommodate him with a good place manifested on that particular evening which he had observed in the assembly gathered round the mouth of the little covered way which led from the bull's private apartments to the street. Thanks to the self-denying retirement on the part of the crowd, the Eye-witness soon found himself in a very good position indeed, with nothing but the small boy, whose friend was on the spikes, between him and the bull's door. [It was a remarkable thing that though these front places were so easily to be obtained there was a brisk demand for all sorts of distant accommodation, and flights of door-steps, shop entrances, and even lamp-posts were inquired for very briskly.]

'What does the bull do?' asked the small boy below, of the smaller boy above.

'Do? Stands up on her two behind legs and all sorts of games,' answered this well-informed character. 'And won't some of yer get gored down there presently, that's all,' he added, in a louder key. Whereat and at the sudden appearance through the open door of a broad black forehead and two white horns, the populace was moved to more retirement than ever, and the small boy in front of the E. W. commenced butting against that gentleman's legs to such an extent that he was glad to let him get behind, preferring the

contingency of the bull's escape to the certainty of having his shins bruised and his toes trampled upon by this turbulent infant.

Such a comfortable little bull. A short-horned, plump, satiny, highly-groomed little bull. Eminently satisfactory; but so little. He stepped up his inclined plane and was upon the platform of his car in no time, as good as gold.

It must be owned that the general aspect of affairs was not imposing. The Eye-witness had had visions of a triumphal car with a black bull of the largest possible size on the top of it, and drawn by six milk-white steeds. He had pictured this to himself, and had made up his mind to see the white horses with the pink rims to their eyes, and flesh-coloured noses such as he loves; so that a team of ordinary gray carriage-horses drawing a break with some planks across the top of it, on which was perched an animal not much bigger than a calf, but compact and well-made, was rather disappointing, and had altogether rather the look of a procession which was to end in the slaughter-house than anything else.

There was one result brought about by the very impressive spectacle which has just been described, which was probably contemplated by the management which organized it. This was the developing in the casual spectator of a burning thirst to see how this very comfortable little animal conducted himself in his professional capacity inside the quaint walls of the Alhambra of Leicester Fields. Indeed, it must be frankly admitted that his countenance was not promising, and it was curious to observe his bovine indifference to the novel situation in which he found himself, and the novel circumstances under which he was placeed.

The scene is now, with the reader's permission, shifted from the back slums of Castle Street to the interior of the Alhambra Circus. The time is two in the afternoon. The wind north-east, and the general aspect of affairs the reverse of encouraging. What shall be said of circus performances in the day-time? Shall we say that they are calculated to *induce* morbid views of life generally, that he who assists at

such solemnizations will in the pauses of the same be found—especially with the wind in the east—to despond about his prospects, to see all the weak points in his previous life with an exceeding distinctness, and every lichen and parasitical excrescence upon his rocks ahead for the future? Shall we say that at such periods the human finger and thumb are averse to the duty of extracting from the waistcoat pocket that sixpence which the woman in the *black muslin cap* expects in return for a programme fourteen inches by eight? Shall we say that as the sufferer fishes and dives for this sixpence (wishing he had a fourpenny-piece instead) that he looks upon the woman in the black cap with feelings nearly allied to detestation, that noticing a slight blush upon the tip of her nose, he gloomily accuses her in his secret soul of intemperance, that maniac longings come upon him to snatch the black cap off her head and to force it down her wicked throat, that he casts bloodthirsty looks at her waistband, and thinks what a good place that would be for the performing bull to impale her by, and bear her off upon one of his horns to his native country, where she should perish from not knowing the Spanish equivalent for 'Whatever you please to give, sir?' Take her away, oh Performing Bull! Don't let her stand there with a genteel cough waiting for a sixpence. Hook her in the waistband with one horn and harass her with the other all the way to Estremadura, and you shall be reported on in these pages in even more flattering terms than those in which the E. W. proposes presently to comment on your brief but highly creditable performance!

The observations made above upon morning entertainments, apply only to those of a theatrical and lighted-up nature, and among these to circus exhibitions above all others. The Alhambra, as the Eye-witness saw it, before the gas was lit, the Alhambra with modified daylight insinuating itself by creeks and crannies, the Alhambra with fog in those galleries which rise to inaccessible heights, and with about seventy people dotted about here and there, was a spectacle which was not exhilarating, and from the shudderings indulged in

by the audience it appeared that people enough were walking over their graves to have filled the place even to the topmost range of seats.

These cemetrial pedestrians, however, were not to be got, and so the performances were played to rather a small audience. There was the usual circus business to be gone through before the bull appeared, and very well it was done. The overture, which appeared to be a fancy overture, was calculated to give satisfaction to every person present, as it appeared to consist of snatches of every known tune, and of two or three unknown ones into the bargain. The dislocation of limb enjoyed by the acrobat boy on stilts left nothing to be desired except a bandage for one's eyes that one might not see him, while the witticisms of the clown were only incomplete from a want of cotton enough in one's ears to render them inaudible. There was the usual severe man, who is not to be trifled with, in the middle of the arena; the usual graceful ladies who do beautiful things with scarfs, and jump through rings in a way that would be very astonishing if the flat surface on the animal's back were not as large as an ordinary dining-table; and the usual muscular gentlemen who seem capable of riding on every part of a horse except his back, and are equally at home upon the extreme tip of his ear and the last hair of his tail.

All these things then preceded, and led up to, the great event of the day—the achievements of the Performing Bull.

It may perhaps be remembered that the last exhibition of this kind attended and reported on by the Eye-witness, was that of the Talking and Performing Fish, and that though it was in no very flattering terms that he commented upon that most unsatisfactory entertainment, he was yet moved with a warm admiration and regard for the poor seal which had such a good face, and was such a bad actor. It really seems as if that studying of the ingenious arts, which we learn, on good authority, is attended with such beneficial results to the human race, was not without its softening influence also on *the brute* creation. This little bull, trotting into the arena

and up to its master as a dog might do; this creature, *for* a bull so singularly docile and intelligent, became instantly a pet with the audience, and with no one among them more so than with him who writes these words. It may be that the sight of strength in combination with docility is always pleasant; it may be that this animal's beauty was prepossessing —for though small of stature, this bull was of very beautiful proportions, and exquisitely made—certain it is that he made his way to the national heart of John, his namesake, and became at once a popular character.

Your Eye-witness was not prepared for so successful an exhibition. He was prepared for more reluctance and delay in the bull's obedience, even supposing he obeyed at all. It is not so much the things done that are astonishing, as that a bull should do them. The performance simply consists of a certain number of leaps over the usual bars, which look like peppermint sticks, and through the usual chastely decorated hoops. The bull is also made to stand on three legs, to go round the arena on his knees, to lie down as if dead, or to kneel in the action of a camel waiting for its rider. He is also placed in a peculiarly humiliating and ridiculous position with one of his fore-feet on a sort of pedestal, and the other on a kind of dwarf obelisk, which is probably the 'act' alluded to by our young friend outside when he stated that the bull would stand up on his two 'behind' legs.

One of the great features in all the undertakings of this very admirable performer is his excessive painstaking. It is quite touching to observe his carefulness, and how he picks his steps through the hoops and over the peppermint sticks. He is a hard breather too, poor little chap; and in his extreme anxiety to do right, puffs out his breath like the jets of steam from an engine. Observe again how incommodious an effort all this running is to him, and how he subsides into a walk the very instant he is through a hoop or over a bar, not cantering round the intermediate space as the other artists will do. Let not his self-command, too, pass unnoticed, as it is exhibited at the

conclusion of his career, when he allows himself to be lifted off the ground on a sort of platform, and to be carried out of the circus on ten men's shoulders without so much as staggering in his pedestal, or moving in any way, except to turn his head from side to side in mute and satisfied inspection of the audience. He bears this carrying process, by-the-by, which is very similar to that submitted to on great occasions by his Holiness the Pope, a great deal better than that prosperous potentate, who always gives the impression, when seen under these circumstances, of being a sufferer from intense sickness, which there is every reason to suppose may be the case.

With this submission to being chaired, our friend (the bull, not the Pope) may be said to conclude the list of his achievements. Though a passive 'act,' it is by no means an easy one, and is quite as creditable to his powers of endurance as that which immediately precedes it, and in which it is his duty to submit to certain attempts to get upon his back made by a gentleman who is persuaded to 'step up' from among the audience, and who would look very like one of the public if he did not look still more like a pantaloon out of work.

This then is all; and yet in one sense it is not all. To your Eye-witness the interest of this exhibition was in the by-play. To him there was in the very clumsiness with which the different feats were performed something which was almost affecting, so strongly did it convey the impression that the bull was doing his best. It was surely a good sight, too, to see him stop in his career at a word from his master, and trot up to him in the middle of the arena at a sign. And in all, to detect a sense of an obstinate temper conquered, and of aversion overcome, which was indicated from time to time by that (in all animals) ungovernable organ the tail, which lashed itself about in almost ceaseless movement against the bull's black sides.

Altogether, then, the Performing Bull is a highly satisfactory character, and as he does not (as the fish did) profess

to be a talking bull as well, may be said to keep faith in all respects with the public, except perhaps in the one matter of size, the woodcut outside the walls, representing him as standing at least six feet from the ground, and altogether losing sight of that comfortable and compact quality which is one of his leading characteristics, and one of his greatest attractions.

XIV.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE FATNESS AND STUPIDITY OF SOME OTHER BULLS WHICH WERE NEITHER LITTLE NOR LEARNED.

THIS is decidedly a world of phases, and assuredly a bovine phase is on your Eye-witness. It was only the other day that his destiny mixed him up with the Performing Bull, and now he finds himself in the Cattle Show, and in a perfect atmosphere of bulls. There must be something zodiacal in this stroke of fate. Taurus must have broken into the house of Aries in the twelfth month, or Capricornus has been getting the upper hand, or it is all Gemini—in a word, the attention of scientific persons and those learned in horoscopes is invited.

With every year of the world's advance the popularity of the Cattle Show—that Walhalla of the British agriculturist—seems to become greater. Every year shows more commotion in Baker Street. Every year the crowd increases. Every year the annual fillip is administered to Madame Tussaud, or her heirs, assignees and executors, with a more stinging energy; and with every year the visitor to the Cattle Show is addressed by a larger row of newspaper advertisements, and is expected to plunge deeper into London amusements, and that headlong dissipation in which, during this frantic week, it is the wont of the agriculturist to indulge. What is he not expected to do? It is distinctly intimated in the public prints that it will be taken ill of him if he does not dine at Judkin's Castigation Tavern, that he must sup at Rarebit's and hear the celebrated comic singer Sam Slivins. Then

again, while music is on the tapis, it may be mentioned that his visit to the Cattle Show will be incomplete and ineffective unless he listens to the inspiriting strains of the 'Rifleman's March.' The Great Globe in Leicester Square is kept open throughout the year on his account. The Sydenham trouser is on the look out, and with its eye—if the expression may be allowed—upon his stalwart leg, yawns expectant. The Talking Fish has come back from a tour in the provinces solely on his account, and on his account has learnt a variety of new tricks, 'which,' says the advertisement, with much dry humour, 'must be seen to be believed,' as indeed they must. Then what lures and snares are laid out for him in the building itself in which he stands; what doors (besides those of Madame Tussaud, about whom more hereafter)—what doors of communication open invitingly into departments where he can buy furniture with which to madden the souls of all the neighbouring farmers; or a brougham for his wife wherewith to bring to a crisis that apoplexy which has long threatened to explode in the system of Mrs. Dumpy, the wife of the senior partner in Dumpy and Level's, the land surveyors. In short the commercial world is on the alert to captivate the British agriculturist, and from a 'Magic Horse-taming Nose Pincher,'—which sounds like something very dreadful indeed—to a 'Rifleman's Registered Knee-cap Garter'—which sounds even more horrible still—all his wants are provided for.

The wants of the animals, which form the object of our agriculturist's visit to the metropolis, are also all provided for. There is plenty of straw for the prize-ox to sink upon when he can sustain the weight of his own fat no longer. There are pens in which the sheep can stand trembling and panting with plethora, and the sides of which prop them up perfectly when they require support; and there are capital make-shift sties in which the pigs, who have never gone through the form of attempting to stand or to open their eyes at all, lie upon their sides, suffocating, before the satisfied eye of the visitor to the Cattle Show.

The cultivation of a high caste and breed in cattle, and the exhibition of specimens which have attained to great perfection in these different classes, are things against which no person in his senses could take exception, and there is happily no doubt whatever that these things are infinitely more the object of the annual show in Baker Street than they used to be. Still there is in this respect much yet to be desired; and there remains an insensate emulation in the matter of developing mere fat, which is as stupid and barbarous as it is in the last degree cruel and inhuman. The white heifer, to which on the occasion of the last Cattle Show the gold medal was awarded, would have been a beautiful and stately creature, but for the wretched folly and barbarism which had induced those to whom she belonged to feed her up till she was, in spite of her beautiful breeding and naturally good form, a ridiculous and distressing object to contemplate. Indeed the poor beast had sunk down upon the straw, unable to sustain any longer the weight of that monstrous and exaggerated mass of fat with which it had been for so many months the blundering object of the proprietor to disfigure her fair proportions. It was impossible to see this really beautiful creature without admiring—not what she was, but what she might have been, and without a strong desire to ask the individual on whom the *dis*credit of her breeding devolved, which he admired most, the proportions of the Apollo Belvidere or those of the late Mr. Daniel Lambert.

The prize heifer was, unhappily, by no means an isolated instance of this cruel and foolish system of over-feeding. The prize ox, being possessed of greater strength than the successful female candidate, was able to stand erect in spite of his weight, but he was obliged to balance himself very artfully, and to spread what remained of his legs very wide apart in order to do so; while the sheep, burdened with their thick wool as well as the ponderous results of their recent diet, were for the most part to be found panting and heaving, lying in their pens, and waiting for the merciful

knife which was in a short time to put a period to their sufferings.

But there is in the collection in Baker Street one department far more horrible than the rest, one class of animals more cruelly dealt with, and whose sufferings are more obvious and more distressing to witness than any which have been hitherto mentioned. It is difficult to awaken compassion or to enlist sympathy for the sorrows of a pig, and the present writer has as keen a dislike as most persons to some of the manners and customs of the porcine group; yet he feels inclined, especially after what he has recently seen, to say a word in favour of these animals, and to endeavour to combat to a certain extent the strong prejudice which exists against them.

Your Eye-witness is willing frankly to admit that he has only been on really intimate terms of friendship with one individual of this tribe, and he may have been a singularly good and interesting specimen. At all events he was an uncommonly pleasant fellow, who would hasten to meet your Eye-witness when that gentleman entered his yard, and would manifest his affection by running in and out between the E. W.'s legs and butting against those limbs with his nose in a most affecting manner, uttering at the same time a succession of oily grunts, calculated to touch—and warm the cockles of—any heart of large and extensive sympathies. In a word, he was an urbane and gentlemanly pig.

Let the reader remember that the pig is an intellectual animal, capable of learning tricks and executing wonders with cards, which throw the deeds of our friends the Performing Bull and the Talking Fish into the shade. Let him remember that the greediness of this animal, which is objected to by some, is cultivated by all who approach it; that he is solicited to eat by those who surround him in a cruel and degrading manner; and finally that he is not always possessed of the corpulent presence and the laziness which we in this country associate with him, the Italian pig being a

lean and long-legged animal, extremely active, and of abstemious habits to a fault.

Let no person be ungrateful enough to disparage the animal but for whose existence we should be ignorant of the flavour of broiled ham. Let us never forget, too, out of what materials he makes it: what a great chemist he must be to produce such agreeable results out of the diet on which he is too often kept. A pig should be looked on as a living factory for the conversion of refuse and garbage of every sort and kind into toothsome and agreeable nutriment—a sort of pork-works in short.

There is one charge which is too often brought against these nice and clever creatures which it is desirable to combat at once; it is the accusation of obstinacy. 'Them's a difficult animal to drive where there's many of 'em, *is* a pig—very,' says the Hampshire drover, and no person who has ever seen a pig or pigs going to or from market will be disposed to deny the assertion; but whence does this difficulty in the conduct of these animals arise? simply, the writer contends, from their intellectual qualities. The pig is consumed perpetually with a burning thirst for information, and with a curiosity which it may be freely owned verges on the morbid. What turning does he come to which he does not wish to avail himself of? What road, what lane, what footpath that he does not desire to explore? What object does he pass on the way which he does not turn to examine and to note in all its aspects? Observe too his activity in this pursuit of knowledge. He is from one side of the road to the other in no time; he runs ahead; nay he is ready, suddenly giving his unintellectual driver the slip, to run back any distance that he may reinvestigate such matters as he may have passed with too little notice, or may have examined in too cursory a manner to satisfy his inquiring mind.

Entertaining, then, these liberal opinions upon porcine matters, your Eye-witness was immensely shocked, when on approaching that portion of the building in Baker Street in which his favourites were confined, he perceived the wretched

discomfort and misery of their condition. To the best of his recollection there was not one single instance in which a pig was to be found who was able to stand or to give any sign of life beyond a feeble squeak in moments of a nearer approach to suffocation than usual. They had none of them any eyes, and the rolls of fat which looked like monster jam-puddings without any jam in them—lay over every part of their naturally intelligent faces except the extreme tip of the snout, which worked convulsively in their ineffectual efforts to breathe. The E. W. has no remembrance of a single tail being visible in the whole collection, but he will swear to the hoofs which grew immediately out of the stomachs of the animals, the usual connecting link of a leg being unable to assert itself at all. Your Eye-witness would have thought that there was not energy enough left in any one of these afflicted creatures to enable him to burst, but later in the day (when in a remote part of the building) he heard an explosive sound, accompanied by a yell, which caused him to change his opinion. 'Un mortel expire,' said the French poet when he saw a falling star—and an uncommonly safe remark it was—'a pig explodes,' said the E. W. when he heard the sound just mentioned, and he thinks the one aphorism on the whole quite equal in sagacity to the other.

One word more, in seriousness, before dismissing this part of the subject. Let it be understood once and for all that the successful breeding and culture of an animal consists in the bringing it as near as possible to the standard of symmetry established as the beau ideal of the class to which it belongs. This should be the canon of the Cattle Show, this the object of the breeder, this the point looked to by the judges, and this alone. Were it so now, and were the hideous disfigurement of an animal by morbid growths of fat a disqualification instead of a recommendation, then would this yearly show be an interesting and important exhibition instead of an annual exposure, which is shameful and cruel, as well as stupid and discreditable. The popularity *of the* Cattle Show as it at present exists—but not as it might

be—is little calculated to correct the too general foreign conception of our national stupidity; and it is a wonderful and distressing thing to think in how many respects this nation lays itself open to ridicule in the eyes of those who are ever awake to detect every one of our weaker insularities.

There were many curious things observable at the Cattle Show; but among them all, perhaps, nothing more remarkable than a general tendency on everybody's part to poke, probe, and pinch with the finger and thumb, the fat, bones, and muscles of the different animals exhibited. With the leading favourites, such as those which had won medals and pecuniary prizes, or which, being more especially disfigured than the others, were labelled as being 'highly commended by the judges'—round all these there was such a crowd of excited amateurs engaged in this process of percussion, that it became quite difficult to insert a hand anywhere, and, in the case of the prize-ox, there was no getting so much as a knuckle near for love or money. Stalwart prize-farmers, who had once got within probing distance of this unhappy beast, took care to keep their position now they had got it, and to make good use of it too, digging him in the ribs, going down on their knees to probe him in the stomach, getting in front of him to punch his head, and generally acting in a manner which, if the theory of pummelling rump-steaks is a good one, was calculated to make this the tenderest animal ever slain. The persistency of these honest personages was not wholly unattended with danger, inasmuch as men of powerful frames, prevented from approaching the object of all this attention, would from distant parts of the building make maniac thrusts with their fists at the animal's sides, which missing their mark would sometimes light upon the well-clothed ribs of those who had got the front places, and who—such were the enthusiasm and excitement of the time—seemed wholly unconscious of these desperate and painful assaults. The force of example is very great; and the Eye-witness getting into this crowd was so hustled about that he at last found *himself* flung, with force, against the

prize-ox itself, and he is thus in a position to state, on the evidence of an imbedded elbow, that the flesh of that eminent character, was of a firm and elastic type, and strongly suggestive of india-rubber.

Nor was this punching mania—which was indulged in by all classes, and sometimes by obvious cockneys who could not know a heifer from a hog—the only remarkable thing connected with visitors to the Cattle Show observed by your Eye-witness. Were there not present the wives and children of the competing farmers? and had they not, some of them, taken up their quarters near to *their* especial sheep or ox, believing in it and thinking it ought to have had the prize, just as the E. W. has seen the families of artists encamped near *their* picture at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, watching its effect on the public, and wondering that anything else in the place was looked at for a moment.

While on the subject of artists, it may be mentioned that this class of persons is represented at the Cattle Show by the most singular and uncomfortable set of men that your Eye-witness ever beheld. Your cattle-painter combines with the appearance of an ordinary signboard artist, a strong flavour of the drover and the horse-dealer. He has also mysterious ways of following his profession, being able—while holding his canvas in one of his hands—to paint in oil with the other, from an animal which is so surrounded by the crowd that he never sees it. He is also much jogged as to the elbows, and generally hustled by the mob. Yet he is indifferent to these things, and progresses none the worse for them; producing a work of art which, though remotely suggestive—the prize-ox being this year a mahogany-coloured one—of a chest of drawers, placed in a colic-green meadow to season, is yet very attractive to a nation so fond of cattle-pictures as ours. The nation in this case, however, does not purchase, but confines itself to admiring (and hustling) the artist, till he is at last obliged to hold on to the stall of the ox, in order to keep in the building at all. Yet even with *this* additional claim upon his hands, he manages to paint

away at the chest of drawers, availing himself of the knocks upon the elbow which he receives for accidental touches, which are very effective. The amateurs do not (as has just been said), purchase; and later in the day your Eye-witness came upon a little knot of these cattle-painters seated in speechless misery, in a very dark place, looking at their own works. They had every one of them two pictures in each hand, and one invariably held between the knees; and as all their lips were moving, without any sound issuing from them, the E. W. could only conclude that these neglected men were engaged in selling their own works to themselves at an imaginary auction, and were whispering imaginary biddings on a scale of awful and unheard-of magnificence.

There is something in the failure of a work of art—however bad it may be—which is always affecting in an eminent degree; and the Eye-witness was touched by the unsuccessful efforts of these unfortunate men, as much as he was by the evident disappointment of a certain lonely and inflated sheep, which was secreted under a flight of steps, and which was being furtively fed by its proprietor with slices of Thorley's food for cattle, as if even now there was a chance of getting the poor animal into such condition as might cause its merits to be recognized. That sheep had doubtless been expected to do great things. Alas! is this the only instance of a home prodigy which, when sent out into the world and tried by the terrible test of comparison, is found to be 'nowhere' in the race?

Of these failures in the competition there was a numerous herd, and they all appeared to your Eye-witness to wear an injured look, laying their heads together, and secretly disparaging their more successful rivals; while one abnormal ox, whose owner was seated on the edge of his pen, evinced the morbid excess to which his appetite had been cultivated, by eating the coat-tails of his master as they hung over the side of the stall.

All this is very sad; and your Eye-witness, becoming anxious to change the scene, is thinking of the open air, with

feelings more keenly sharpened to appreciate that luxury by the somewhat tallowy smell emitted by the Cattle Show generally—when he happens to observe, in a corner of the building, a door leading to an obscure passage, dimly lighted with gas. One glance at the inscription over this door is enough for him. He plunges through it, pays his shilling with a free hand, hears a faint tinkling of music, stumbles up a staircase; the music becomes louder—another door opens, the music becomes deafening—and the Eye-witness emerges into a gorgeous apartment of vast size, and with the oddest-looking people, in the oddest-looking dresses, and in the strangest attitudes, standing round about it.

XV.

HIS EVIDENCE AS IT AFFECTS A GOODLY SOCIETY OF PRINCES AND NOBLES INTO WHICH HE WAS ADMITTED ON THE PAYMENT OF A SHILLING FEE.

A LARGE room handsomely decorated, with the oddest-looking people, in the oddest-looking dresses, and in the strangest attitudes, standing round about it. This was the scene upon which your Eye-witness had just entered at the conclusion of that Cattle Show experience which formed the subject of his last report. His entry was accompanied by a burst of music; and the bewilderment produced by the sight of the strange figures, by which he found himself surrounded, was something modified by the presence of other personages wearing the costume of our own day, and in other respects resembling the ordinary types of humanity to be met with in the England of the nineteenth century.

These, however, are the exceptions. The greater part of the occupants of this gorgeous apartment being habited in vestments of brilliant colour, of fanciful and strange design, and sometimes in garments decorated with a blazing wealth of jewellery. Here are a Cardinal, a great warrior, a quaker, a gentleman in a toga, and a lady with a powdered head, all to be taken in at one glance. The military and naval pro-

fessions are not unrepresented, the bishop of Protestantism is here, as well as the defender of the Romanist persuasion, the deputy-lieutenant, and the secretary of state, as well as the Chinese commissioner, and the sovereign of these realms.

On this enchanted ground, too, the costume is in almost every instance a safe guide to the rank and titles of the wearer. It is too often the case elsewhere, that a noble earl or marquis is to be found in a shabby coat, rather white at the seams, in dog-skin gloves, and carrying a sixpenny walking-stick; but here the members of that peerage, which it is the delight of our nation to study, are habited as these august persons should be, in a dress indicative of their rank, with their coronets fixed more or less uncomfortably upon the tops of their heads, and their ermine right to a tuft. Nay it is possible to go a degree farther, and with hushed breath and trembling knees to mount a step higher. Here is the long-lost monarch with a crown on, whom we have been looking for all our lives; and the bitter disappointment which we all feel—disguise it as we will—at seeing a queen in a Paris bonnet, or an emperor in a glossy hat, does not await us here, where sceptres, and maces, and gold sticks, and state swords, are in every hand that has a right to hold them.

But what place then is this? why is this spacious hall in close contiguity to a Cattle Show, and intimately mixed up with Baker Street, where yet we may mix in such good society, and bask in the sunshine of aristocracy in such a blissful degree? The Eye-witness—to keep the reader no longer in that suspense which has been consuming him too long already—the Eye-witness has passed from the Cattle Show into the wax-work department attached to the Baker Street bazaar, or in other words he is—at Madame Tussaud's!

Madame Tussaud's, or—as it is rendered in our ordinary vernacular—Tissard's, is with the whole population of this country, metropolitan or provincial, something more than an exhibition, it is an institution. Whether it is from the circumstance touched on above,—the good company into which

the visitor to this establishment is introduced,—or from the profound and awful misery of the place which provides the Englishman with an *entertainment which does not make him happy;* from which of these two causes the popularity of this exhibition arises, the Eye-witness is unable certainly to state. As far as an opinion goes, however, he is ready to express his own personal belief, that the last named of these two attractive elements has the most to do with the inconceivably great success of Madame Tussaud's. At all events the fact is so. Visitors from the country go to see these wax-works, if they go nowhere else; tradesmen living in the neighbourhood, put 'near Madame Tussaud's' on their cards; the omnibuses which run down Baker Street, announce that they pass this deceased lady's door as a means of getting customers, and there is scarcely a cab-horse in London, but would make an instinctive 'offer' to stop, as he went by the well known entrance to 'Tissard's.'

The remarkable woman with whom this exhibition originated, was born as long ago as in 1760. The present writer remembers her well, sitting at the entrance of her own show, and receiving with evident satisfaction the shillings which poured into her exchequer. She was evidently a person of marked abilities, and of a shrewd and strong character. The establisment is kept up by her successor, 'whose chief aim,' we are told in the catalogue 'has always been to combine amusement with instruction,' and both possibly (but this is not included in the statement) with shillings. From this catalogue we gain, by-the-by, a world of useful and interesting information, and many new views on general subjects. Taking, for instance, the really handsome room called the Hall of Kings, we find that it is 'so named from containing several portraits in oil by eminent artists,' but whether it is from the fact that the portraits are 'in oil' or from the eminence of the artists by whom they have been executed, that this apartment has been called the Hall of Kings, it is difficult to understand. It is equally difficult, too, to appreciate the full truth of a statement made further on in the same catalogue, and still in con-

nexion with this Hall of Kings. We are told at the conclusion of a brief biography of our late sovereign William IV. that he died in 1837, leaving no issue, *to the grief of the whole nation.* Your Eye-witness protests strongly against this as a member of the nation alluded to. What!—is a nation which is in the habit of providing for the issue of its monarchs in the liberal manner in which it is our custom to deal with these royal personages, to be plunged in grief at having none in this particular case to provide for? No. We are not plunged in grief by this circumstance; far from it. It is a joyful thought, and we are left, in consequence of this absence of issue on the part of our sailor king, with more shillings to spend on Madame Tussaud.

The Eye-witness finds a difficulty in stirring from this Hall of Kings, and is especially drawn to a consideration of the effigy of the particular sovereign concerning whose want of issue the cataloguist of Madame Tussaud (who was evidently not a householder) is moved to such despair. The group in which this prince is placed is (chronologically) calculated to produce temporary insanity in all beholders. The E. W. has sent for an eminent mad doctor, and pending his arrival will endeavour to arrange his ideas on the subject of this bewildering assembly.

The central feature of it is our lamented king, George the Fourth, who is standing with one leg bent and with beautifully curling hair smiling in an insulting manner at his father, who is not allowed to be on the dais at all, but is placed aloof at a respectful distance. The first gentleman in Europe wears his real coronation robes—and the writer would meekly ask whether there is not something compromising to the dignity of royalty in the sale of such wares, and their exhibition in this place, and whether, if this finery must be sold at all, it would not be better to divide it into small parcels or lots, and let it be privately disposed of, to be worked up in mantles for our shop-windows, or properties for the Alhambra Circus?

Round about the dais, which has just been described, are

grouped many illustrious noblemen, statesmen, and prelates of all periods of English history, including the present Bishop of Exeter and the late Lord Nelson. But this anachronistic arrangement is so little to the taste of the great admiral last-mentioned, that he is represented with his back to his sovereign, descending the steps of the throne, and evidently about to leave a court of which no good is to be expected. Before, however, he can get away he will have to pass though a group which is hardly more promising in a chronological point of view. It consists of four persons seated in a circle. The first is Charlotte, the wife of George the Third, the second Queen Caroline, and the third the Princess Charlotte, daughter, as everybody knows, to the first gentleman in Europe; the remaining chair is occupied by our before-mentioned favourite, William the Fourth. He is evidently thoroughly bewildered and disheartened by the presence of the three ladies just alluded to, and pointing them out in a demonstrative manner with his open hand is obviously saying, 'Bless my life and soul, I thought all these women were dead and gone long ago—and here they are, come to court, and sitting down too, as if they meant to stop.'

What wonder that a family of four sisters fresh from the Cattle Show, and who had established themselves for a good afternoon with British history in the Hall of Kings—what wonder that these honest persons were a lttle mystified, and were to a certain extent apt to quarrel with each other as to who was who in this royal assembly! The style of their conversation was of this sort. (The E. W. begs to acknowledge here that he is a mean listener to conversation in public places, and as carried on by strangers.)

1st Sister. No, Jane—that *can't* be.

2nd Sister. Why?

3rd Sister. Emily, how can you say so when you know that she was beheaded.

4th Sister. George the Second was he's father, and George the Third married Queen Caroline, which the crownd is on head.

2nd Sister. No, Sarah. *She* was *he's* wife.

4th Sister (who pays no attention). And the sceptre in her hand.

1st Sister (evidently an authority). George the Second succeeded George the First, and was grandfather to George the Fourth, who married—

3rd Sister. But if *she* was *he's* wife, who was *she?* (pointing to the Princess Charlotte.)

2nd Sister. Good gracious me, Emily, what a stupid thing you are! Don't you know that when Queen Anne ascended the throne—

'Nay,' thought the Eye-witness, turning away, 'if you've gone back to Queen Anne, I think it's time I got out of this as quickly as possible.' Passing the spot two hours afterwards, the E. W. found the sisters still at it, and dim sounds of '*she* was *he's* wife' were floating upon the evening breeze.

It is a curious circumstance that all the grouped figures in the Tussaud gallery appear to be speaking, with the exception only of those which are represented as being engaged in conversation. The silence of these last is absolutely awful. The combined potentates in the separated portion of the Hall of Kings—near the Bath-bun depôt—who are intended to be discussing affairs of state, are obviously all speechless. [It is distressing by-the-by to find from this group that Marshal Ney was afflicted with weak knees—he will never be able to sustain the weight of Napoleon's favourite Mameluke, who is just about to tumble forward against him.] But though the members of this congress are thus evidently afflicted with dumbness, such is far from being the case with many other distinguished personages in this gallery. William the Conqueror (an authentic likeness) is speaking with much animation, and is evidently asking his queen, who in vain endeavours to calm him, how it is possible that the gentleman on his right (the late Sir Robert Peel) can keep his centre of gravity, when leaning forward to so alarming an extent. Take again the King and Queen of Hanover. His majesty has got his son, a boy about eight years old, upon his knee, and

turning to his queen, who looks upon the child with a sneer of undisguised contempt, says, 'My dear, what is to be done with this boy, he's growing up, you know?' The queen answers, still regarding the boy with moody disgust.—'I don't see that *anything* can be done with him. He looks to me as if he had been drinking,' which is certainly the case. There is no shadow of a doubt, mind, about this conversation being right to a word. Let the reader go and stand before the group in question, and say if they are not talking as here described.

The most loquacious figures of all, however, are those which are addressing society in general, and not any individual member of the same. These persons never select any one individual present to give their confidence to. This is an unmistakeable fact, it being impossible—the E. W. has tried it—to get into any part of the room in which you can catch a wax-work's eye. Thus in the case of the King and Queen of Greece, when he points to his wife and child, and defiantly exclaims, 'Do you mean to say I'm not a domestic character?—Pooh!'—he addresses this question not to you, but to some one over the top of your hat, or behind you, or through you, or under your left arm, or in some other equally remote and inaccessible spot.

To those who regret not having lived in the days when the Kemble family adorned the stage, it will be a melancholy consolation to be able to gather from the effigies of the late Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble, as they appear in this collection, some idea of their manner of acting. It is impossible to deny that the first-named of these eminent performers has a certain side-long and crab-like manner of throwing herself into her part, which, combined with a tying up of the jaw as though the artiste was afflicted with tooth-ache, is vastly impressive; nor can we wonder that 'her powers' (as the catalogue informs us) 'speedily *raised her fame and opulence.*' With regard to this lady's brother, the great John Kemble, we are told by the pamphlet just quoted that 'whether we view him as an actor or an author we shall find that he

possessed wonderful talent.' It being extremely difficult to view this gentleman as an actor in the present day, we are compelled to content ourselves with viewing him here in wax, the result of which scrutiny is, that whether he was possessed of wonderful talent or not, he was certainly possessed of very wonderful legs, of a wonderful power of keeping upright upon them, and of a presence generally which was calculated to affect the spectator with profound depression.

It may be mentioned, while upon this subject of the catalogue, that the Eye-witness is pleased to observe the extreme chastity of ideas possessed by the management on the subject of splendour in decoration. Thus in the ingenious document, which has been so often quoted, it is mentioned that the likeness of Mr. G. V. Brooke was taken from life 'in the magnificent dress as worn by him'; while on referring to the model itself, the visitor will be a little surprised to perceive that this performer is clothed, from head to foot, in a single garment of white merino, alike suggestive of ancient Rome and modern hair-dressing, but perfectly free from ornament of any kind or sort, unless a certain amount of dirt is to be looked on in a decorative light. The Eye-witness has dim recollections of a time, many years ago, when this figure was habited in a gorgeous costume, which he thinks is at present worn by the monarch of the Greek Isles. He does not assert this confidently, but it may be so. Such things have been in the annals of wax-work.

Your Eye-witness, passing in review before him the other models in the Hall of Kings, and the Great Room in which the members of our present Royal Family are combined into an affecting central group, finds one or two features of the collection impressed strongly on his mind—one or two questions for answers to which his soul is clamorous. He wishes to know why there is so strong an inclination, in many of the ladies and gentlemen here assembled, to lean forward—and why any member of this company, who is supposed to be in motion, is represented rather as skating

than walking? The figure of John Knox may be quoted as a remarkable instance of this skating tendency. He is advancing upon the unhappy Mary Queen of Scots (with whom he is supposed to be arguing), on the outside edge, threatening to crush her not only metaphorically but practically if she does not promptly yield to the force of his reasoning. The whole of this group is well worthy of attention, for is not Martin Luther blazing away at this injured lady on one side while the Rev. Knox is skating dead at her on the other? Lord Darnley and John Calvin are standing behind her in different stages of intoxication, while the Queen of Scots herself is smiling feebly and slipping slowly off her chair in obvious idiotcy produced by the noisy gentlemen on each side of her.

The Eye-witness is now called to another part of these rooms, and is drawn to a consideration of matters of a less soothingly aristocratic nature than those among which he has lingered so long, and in the midst of which (did duty permit him) he would gladly linger yet.

'And every one of these here has been hung!' said a powerfully built gentleman in top-boots, speaking to himself aloud with immense relish. 'Every one of 'em hung!' he said again, smacking his lips.

He was standing in the middle of the room of horrors, and looking dead at the new model of Dr. Smethurst, who with his hand raised in deprecation, and with a gentle smile upon his countenance, appeared to be softly reasoning with the agriculturist and saying, 'No, dear sir, no—do not say so. *I* have not been hung—far from it.'

The Room of Horrors!

To go into the Room of Horrors, rather late in the afternoon but before the gas is lit, requires courage. To penetrate through a dark passage, under the guillotine scaffold, to the mouth of a dimly-lighted cell, through whose bars a figure in a black serge dress is faintly visible, requires still more *courage*. Your Eye-witness did this on the same principle

which causes judicious persons to jump headlong into the sea from a bathing-machine instead of gradually and timidly emersing themselves from the ankle upwards. The plan is equally successful in both cases, and the reader who is going to visit the Room of Horrors is strongly urged to adopt this system. Let him enter this very terrible apartment at a swift pace, and without pausing for an instant let him turn sharply to the right and scamper under the scaffold, taking care that the structure, which is very low, does not act after the manner of the guillotine which it sustains, and take his head off. Let him thoroughly master all the circumstances of the Count de Lorge's imprisonment, the serge dress, the rats, the brown loaf—let him then hasten up the steps of the guillotine and saturate his mind with the blood (it resembles currant-jelly) upon the decapitated heads of the sufferers in the French Revolution—this done, the worst is over. The first plunge is made, his back (to pursue the metaphor with which this paragraph began) is thoroughly wet, and he can descend and examine the other horrors of this horrible place with a calm soul.

But *what* a horrible place! There is horror in the dull cold light descending from above upon those figures in the Old Bailey dock, all with the same expression on their faces, upturned, inquisitive, bewildered. Horror in the unpicturesqueness of this aspect of crime—crime in coats and trousers being more horrible than crime in doublets and trunk-hose. Horror in the inflated smiling heads, cast after death by hanging. Horror in the basket by the side of the guillotine—a basket just the length of a body without the head, and filled with blood-drinking sawdust. Horror in the straps and buckles which hold the victim on the plank till the broad edge of steel descends and does its work. Horror in the smell of the wax figures, in the folds of the empty clothes, in the clicking of machinery behind the scenes, and in the faces of most of the visitors to the place.

What says the catalogue about this Room of Horrors?

'In consequence of the peculiarity (!) of the appearance of the following highly interesting Figures and Objects, they are placed in an adjoining room. The sensation created by the crimes of Rush, Mannings, &c., was so great that thousands were unable to satisfy their curiosity. It therefore induced the Messrs. Tussaud to expend a large sum in building a suitable room for the purpose, and they assure the public that so far from the exhibition of likenesses of criminals creating a desire to imitate them, experience teaches them that it has a direct tendency to the contrary.'

Our old friend the cataloguist is not only reassuring (as seen above) when he gets into this Room of Horrors, but is bent very obviously upon impressing as often as possible, and not unfrequently in the same words, such moral lessons as his subject suggests, or the weaknesses of the visitors to the place may seem to require. Nor is the obviousness of his truths more flattering to the spectator's powers of discernment, than the nature of the cautions administered is to his sense of right and wrong. The daring novelty and originality, however, of the cataloguist's remarks, sometimes leads him a little astray in his application of them. In treating of the model of the swindler Robson, he says, 'How happy is that mortal that can withstand temptation!' This would surely lead us to the conclusion that Robson had withstood temptation, which was scarcely the case. In the instance of Strahan, Bates, and Paul, our literary friend's imagination appears to have run away with him altogether. Your Eye-witness was wholly unable to find either one of these gentlemen, who are yet numbered in the catalogue. How is this? It is true that Smethurst, Garibaldi, and Montalembert were wanted in a hurry; is there any connection between the disappearance of the mendacious firm alluded to above, and the coming to light of the three gentlemen just named? It is just possible. It is a pity, at all events, under these circumstances to moralise on the case of these absent malefactors. 'Happy,' says the author, who has been so largely quoted already, and whom it is difficult not to extract from at still greater length—'happy that country that has judges to do justice, and laws to punish

wrongdoers.' To which your Eye-witness feels inclined to add, 'Happy that wax-work that has cataloguists to describe, and figures to correspond to the description.'

An inexpressible dreariness is surely added to the other horrors of this chamber of despair by the sounds of distant music which reach it from without at gusty intervals. The band which plays in the principal and somewhat less horrible room outside is audible in this ghastly apartment in some of the stormier and more untidy passages of the overture to the Bronze Horse, as well as in the last tune but one of the Maritana quadrilles. It is a beautiful band, and in the bumping and braying order of music leaves nothing to be desired.

There is in the Room of Horrors a figure in the shadow of one of the docks, which struck your Eye-witness as the most frightful of all the models exhibited. It is a representation of one John Thom, alias Sir William Courtenay, who raised an insurrection in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, in the course of which a young officer was shot by this brute under peculiarly distressing circumstances. It is mentioned in the catalogue that this miscreant is dressed as the King of Jerusalem, which he professed to be. On reading this announcement, the visitor to the Room of Horrors hastens to examine the costume which is considered to be that appropriate to the King of Jerusalem, and is probably as much surprised as was your Eye-witness to find that it consists of a dress-coat, a pair of black trowsers, tightly strapped over the feet, a huge turn-down collar, and a dark blue cloak with a velvet collar with black cords and tassels. Surely this is very dreadful.

For a comfortable, bold, unconscientious, and jovial villain, let us rest contented with Nana Sahib. The model of this Eastern reprobate is the only element of hope in the room, and this fact carries out the theory propounded above, that an additional horror is imparted to crime when its perpetrators are clothed in the ordinary costume of our day. It is the Eastern dress worn by this potentate which takes the edge off his criminal repulsiveness.

Suppose some of these murderers were to be transplanted into the other room, and to be labelled as great philanthropists, should we find ourselves in a high state of admiration at their benevolent expressions? Your Eye-witness is disposed to think that there is much in position. He has himself, in looking at a collection of heads in a phrenologist's window, all of which he understood to be murderers, found himself dwelling at length on the especial villainy of some one specimen amongst them, when his eye happening to light upon the label affixed to this particular cast, he has discovered that it is the head of the admirable Howard, or the Man of Ross, or Dr. Jenner, or some other equally harmless and unexceptionable person. Truly there is much in circumstance, and nobody looks to advantage in the dock of the Old Bailey.

Enough of the Old Bailey and of horrors; they have been courageously faced, and we may now, without any imputation on our nerves, skip out of this gloomy apartment as fast as we like; and as soon as we have glanced at the Napoleon relics, may get out again into the frosty open air. The Napoleon relics are really in some instances very remarkable, and are authenticated on good authority. The carriage taken after the battle of Waterloo is especially interesting, and with its huge wheels and immense strength and solidity of construction, is highly suggestive of the rough roads which have to be rattled over in the course of a campaign. The contrivances of which it is full for the Emperor's convenience are very curious, and the visitor to this part of the Tussaud collection is allowed to get into the carriage and sit there if he chooses, examining the inside of this very interesting vehicle at his ease. It is a noisy and jingling process, though, the getting into this conveyance—as the E. W. can affirm by personal experience—and is not done without attracting the attention of everybody in the room; so let all modest and embarrassed persons think twice before they attempt it.

There are some curiosities in this collection to which the

Eye-witness wishes he could attach more reverence than he finds it possible to get up. 'The piece of cloth of gold from the field of that name,' sounds dubious, and though the authenticity of the '*paste star* worn by the Duke of Sussex,' the pair of spurs worn at Court by the same prince, and the sashes of the late Dukes of Kent and Cambridge are doubtless genuine relics, the Eye-witness does not find that they have impressed his mind as strongly as might have been expected.

What shall be said of the man who could stand at the door of the Room of Horrors, *eating a pork pie?* Yet such a man there was—your Eye-witness saw him—a young man from the provinces; a young man with light hair, a bright blue neckcloth, and a red and beefy neck. His eye was on the model of Marat assassinated in a bath, and wallowing in blood, and with this before him he could eat an underdone pork pie! Oh, vile young man! oh, provincial of the pork-stained doublet (for the bits of jelly are dropping on thy satin vest)! oh, thou naughty varlet, thou art of those who eat a midday dinner, and sit in the summer months on the Sunday afternoons with the county paper in their hands, reflectively and sleepily dyspeptic!

It is the last hair which breaks the camel's back, it was this last horror that sent your Eye-witness out of Madame Tussaud's as fast as his legs would carry him. The criminals haunted him and left upon his mind (do others know this feeling?) a sensation that he was a criminal too. Oh, would that the sight of fresh young faces, of those bands of youngsters home for the holidays, and of gay young girls bent upon Christmas fun, with whom the street outside is crowded, were similarly infectious!

XVI.

HIS EVIDENCE IN THE MATTER OF THE MISANTHROPIC SOCIETY, ITS TERRIBLE DOINGS, ITS OCCULT PRACTICES, AND THE GRASP OBTAINED BY IT ON SOME OF OUR PLACES OF DIVERSION.

ARE there so few sources of melancholy in the world, so few things to make one wretched that we must needs seek out gratuitous misfortunes and plunge, of malice prepense, into desperation of our own construction? Is external London so hilarious that we must escape from it and take refuge in stalactite caves, and in Paris by moonlight? Can we not extract damp enough from a wet day in the month of January, that we must go and be sprinkled with the spray of a New River company waterfall, dimly lighted by inadequate gas? Do we know no bores, that we must go and pay a shilling (sixpence extra for reserved seats) to be bored by bad imitators *of* bad imitators, of our popular entertainers? Does no vulgarity of those with whom we are occasionally brought in contact ever set our nerves on edge, that we must go and have them tortured by professional and studied smartness that reaches the very inmost marrow of our spinal chords? In short, is the natural gaiety of the metropolitan heart so boisterous that asylums of sadness, where that hilarity may be tamed down, are absolutely required for the safety of the national character? It must be so, else why the Tussaud's gallery of which it was the province of your Servant to speak but now, and why, oh why—The Tristisseum?

In the report just alluded to on the exhibition of waxwork in Baker Street, it was the tremendous attempt of your Eye-witness to contend that there is for our sprightly nation a hideous and morbid attractiveness about the gloomy. See how they love a funeral, a body, an undertaker's shop. They will build round cemeteries, you cannot stop them. You remove your burying-ground out of town, and the ghoul-like Britisher will follow that institution as if it was its own

funeral. There can be no safer speculation than the building of a town round about a cemetery, every available house is sure to be taken. In the summer months the suburban burial-gardens are frequented by the holiday crowd, and a snack upon a tombstone or a sandwich in a catacomb is a form of meal which is infinitely comforting to our countrymen and countrywomen, and which is found to stimulate the most jaded appetite.

Why it was only last Sunday that your Eye-witness was passing down the long and dismal thoroughfare which leads from the church dedicated to Pancras, in a northerly direction towards Hampstead—he was proceeding along the street, when his attention was caught by a rapping sound of sinister augury coming from a shop with closed shutters but open door. This door had, by-the-by, a wicket half way up it, closing the lower portion of the entrance, and composed very cheerfully and ingeniously of emblems of death. Looking over this paling your Eye-witness had the luck to see a sight such as he had never met with before in his life. Three children were standing round a child's blue coffin; the biggest, a boy, was inserting the final decorative nails, the second was observing him closely, and the third, a chubby infant (too short to get a view of the lid on which the boy was performing), was holding on to the coffin by two plated handles and looking round triumphantly (as our artists say) at the spectator. The whole of these children were in the highest conceivable state of glee, pride, and conceit. Now there is little doubt that this boy had been allowed a Sunday treat of coffin-making, had perhaps been asked what he would like to do on his birthday, had got into his father's good graces after the early Sunday dinner, and had received the long-desired permission to operate on a real coffin in course of construction for a real corpse. 'Mind how you knock 'em in, sir,' says the papa, as he gives the little lad a handful of nails and a hammer. 'May I go and help him?' cries an eager sister, 'and me to?' lisps the youngest hope. Papa, in great good humour, and reeking at every pore with

roast pork, gives the desidered permission, and the infant ghouls troop off in high spirits to their grim amusement. Surely this is British. 'Vive la tristesse' is our national motto. 'Vive la tristesse,' by all means, and by all manner of means 'Vive le Tristisseum!'

Your Eye-witness is British. He also has been an infant ghoul. He also has in early childhood frequented burying-grounds, and acted the part of an amateur and supererogatory mourner at funerals. Nay, in his boyhood he once buried a favourite cat in a workmanlike manner. Shall he not complete his curriculum of despair, and take his degree at the Tristisseum? Not another word about it. It shall be done, and done quickly.

Size, dirt, premature age, and an absence of fixtures are among the first things which strike the visitor to the institution. Of all these phenomena, perhaps the most striking is the premature look of age about everything in the interior of the building. It is a wonderful and puzzling inquiry how it has had time to get so old, considering the comparative recency of its erection. To take, for instance, the theatre. If one of the apartments in the palace of Versailles had been left untouched, unrepaired, unswept, since the period of the construction of that superb edifice, it is just possible that it might, by this time, present an appearance in some slight degree approximating to the astounding antiquity of aspect which distinguishes the Theatre Royal Tristisseum. What is the reason of this? Do dull entertainments and bad jokes turn into noxious vapours and wreathe themselves around the huge columns, which are humanely placed about this apartment so as to impede the view of the stage as much as possible? Is it the vapour of many comic songs that lingers in noisome blackness on the ceiling? It may be so. It may be also that the music to which this theatre is accustomed may have aged it prematurely, who shall say how its brow, to speak figuratively, may have been darkened by the piano alone, which keeps the orchestra together, an instrument which, having been found to be too far gone for the

parlour of a public-house chantant, has been purchased regardless of expense by the authorities at the Colosseum, and which is distinguished by being so supernaturally out of tune in those notes which it possesses (the five upper ones of the last octave in the treble clef), that it is a subject of rejoicing to all persons with nerves that the whole of the other notes are destitute of all sound, except that which would be produced by striking a piece of firewood with a knife-handle.

The portentous and bewildering misery of the Tristisseum which, like everything else connected with the place, is colossal, has been remarked upon by many persons, but few if any, know to what train of circumstances this melancholy is to be attributed. The Eye-witness is happy to be able to inform the public that he is in a position to enlighten them on this matter.

It is the especial office and business of the E. W. to ferret out the hidden mysteries of this metropolis, and to discover the secret agencies which are at work in bringing about those external results which most of us are satisfied with contemplating as they appear on the surface. Now of all the revelations which it has been the lot of the E. W. to make in the course of his numerous and laborious researches, there has appeared none so remarkable as that which he is now about to reveal (in the strictest confidence) to the reader.

The Eye-witness has discovered, then, that there exists in the capital a Society called 'THE MISANTHROPIC SOCIETY,' to whose agency are attributable many remarkable features of this metropolis, to which allusion may on future occasions be made, but which are brought more especially in connexion with the present report, for reasons which shall be presently explained.

The London Misanthropic Society is a large and influential body, whose habits and principles are worthy of great attention. The members of this corporation are chiefly men of considerable wealth, who yet hire themselves out in certain capacities, which the means at their disposal render it wholly unneces-

sary that they should engage themselves in. They are ever ready to accept situations as lecturers on the polarization of light, or the formation of strata, at our scientific institutions; they will undertake to keep order during the longest speeches delivered at Exeter Hall; and they clamour for employment as bell-ringers at all chapels, where they may be allowed to perform twice a day for three quarters of an hour upon a bell of impaired and cracked constitution. [It was a member of this association who wrote the pamphlet to show that the prevalence of watches and clocks in modern times should *not* do away with, or diminish the use of bells, which were invented when those means of ascertaining when it was church-time did not exist.]

The habits of the Misanthropic Society are as remarkable as their principles. They meet every wet Sunday in a large building belonging to them situated in the New Road. This assembly-room is bounded on the right by a Hospital for Spinal Curvatures, on the left by a Widows' Cap depôt; over the way is a Penitentiary; and a reservoir and a Particular Baptists' Chapel are within easy view of the windows. Every member of the Company lives in Pentonville, and they all drive, on the wet Sundays before-mentioned, to their rendezvous, in separate mourning-coaches, except the President who travels—reclining at length, and reading Buchan's Domestic Medicine by a dark lantern—in a one-horse hearse.

Your Eye-witness had no sooner heard of the existence of this Society, than he at once resolved to join it, feeling that such great revelations and discoveries would result from his taking that step, that it was nothing less than his absolute duty to do so. He has not been disappointed. Having signed his indentures, and pledged himself to dress in black, to shave off his beard, retaining however a pair of whiskers, and to wear a mohair stock—having declared his determination to abstain henceforth from all wines and fermented liquors; having generally professed his readiness to discourage all schemes tending to enliven the metropolis or its inhabitants, and to foster and encourage to the utmost all

such projects as appeared in all reasonable probability likely to bore, harass, and depress the town and its inhabitants as aforesaid, your E. W. was duly elected; and having taken lodgings in a back-street in Pentonville, and ordered a mourning-coach to call there and take him up, found himself at the Society's rooms on the very next Sunday, which happened to be one of those days combining, in a felicitous manner, the fullest measure of rain and moisture with a sharp and cutting east wind.

The hidden mysteries connected with the initiation of a new member by the Misanthropic Society are extremely awful; but your Eye-witness is bound by so dreadful an oath not to reveal them, that upon that part of the subject he remains tongue-tied. All that he dares to divulge is, that the members meet in a large apartment, the blinds of which are drawn down; that they sit upon Windsor chairs round a deal table, each with a glass of cold water before him, and read papers. As soon as every member has read his paper and finished his tumbler of water, the Society proceeds to business.

It was at this period and stage of the proceedings, that your Eye-witness made the great discovery which he now designs to give to the world. He found, to his amazement, that it is part of the system of the Misanthropic Society, to get hold of such public places of amusement as their immense wealth puts within their grasp, and to support one by the proceeds of another. Let us take a special instance. It was —as the reader has already been reminded—our task a short time since to deal with the Tussaud Exhibition. What was the surprise of the E. W. when he found that this prosperous gallery was entirely in the hands of the Misanthropic Society, and that the immense income derived from it was entirely devoted to the *keeping up of the Tristisseum!*

Your faithful Witness has seen with his own eyes, what explicates a great mystery. He has seen the LEASE OF THE TRISTISSEUM. It was before him on a giant roll of parchment, which he strove in vain wholly to unroll. It would

curl up tight as fast as it was unfurled; and your E. W. could only see a fragment of the deed at a time, strive as hard as he would. He saw, however, enough to explain a great deal. He saw that the document required that the building should be kept in *un*-tenantable *dis*-repair; that it should be inadequately lighted; that no mops, brooms, or pails of water should be used within its walls; that to re-paper or paint or scrape any portion of it should forfeit the lease; that the introduction of so much as a single pail of white-wash, or block of hearth-stone, or square of soap, should involve the same penalty; that every tendency in the papers on the walls to peel off, in the plaster to crack and crumble to the earth, and in the ceilings to mildew, should be cultivated in the highest degree; that the principal saloon should be in the centre of the building, and should be so surrounded by other apartments that the external air should never reach it; that portrait-busts without labels should abound, and be placed on pedestals which should wabble when touched; that a general tendency to much bare and echoing corridor should be encouraged; that no first-class exhibition, of any kind or sort, should take place within the walls; that no singers or players of eminence were to be admitted, nor any gentleman allowed to give an entertainment, who could not produce authentic credentials to prove that he should be able to combine, in equal parts, the qualities of dulness and vulgarity; that any one flash of real wit or humour should involve the expulsion (with ignominy) of the entertainer; and that any great and remarkable feats of dulness and boredom should be rewarded by an increase of salary to the performer. Your Eye-witness saw also that this lease or agreement required that 'at such months or periods of the year as shall be observed in this country to be most frequently characterised by rain, fogs, frosts, and low degrees of barometrieal temperature, there shall be such enlargement and increase in the cavern, waterfall, icicle, grotto, dripping well, and lonely pool department of this *institution*, as can conveniently be made; and that at such

times also there shall be such apertures, gully-holes, traps, and ventilators opened in the aforesaid grottoes and caverns, and also in all the corridors, lobbies, and passages leading to the same, as shall cause the said corridors, lobbies, and passages to be replete with draughts, currents of damp air, and fogs, and as shall cause the gas-lights (which shall be but few and sparse) to be nearly extinguished, and shall reduce their light to a flaring and flickering faintness.'

Madly clutching at the tightly curling parchment, and unrolling another yard or so of it, your Eye-witness read also that there should be special seasons of the year when lures and baits should be held out by the ogres then in possession of the institution, for the inveigling and drawing into the same, of youths, and even infants of tender years; that for this purpose Christmas-trees should be provided and should be hung with appalling masks; gaunt and long-legged dolls, animals of uncouth and previously unknown formation, and the like engines of terror and despair; that these should be distributed by lot among the aforesaid children of tender years, who should also be endowed at the same time and through the same agency with highly-coloured trumpets, from which no audible sound should be by the strongest lungs extractable, but the vermilion of whose mouth-pieces should be easily come at, and should be guaranteed to adhere to the lips of all children applying their mouths to the same. It is moreover specified that an especial invitation to attend at these juvenile entertainments be dispatched to the married clergyman who advertises for 'unruly children,' there being no instance on record of any young person who has gone out from any one of these festivities in other than a humbled, crushed, and spirit-broken condition.

It is furthermore shown in this agreement that there shall be a general absence of fixtures and a cultivation of a certain barrenness of aspect throughout all the rooms, apartments, saloons, and lobbies of this edifice; that there shall at all times be one or more vague and terrible bird's-eye views of

our leading European capitals on view, artfully arranged so as to cause all such persons as had nourished in their minds intentions of visiting the said capitals to determine rather to remain in their native country in untravelled obscurity than insure their own misery by journeying to foreign towns of so dreadful and sinister an aspect; and that when these have been long enough before the public eye they shall be withdrawn, and such a representation of our own capital be substituted in their stead as shall prove to the wretched metropolitan that he is actually living in a more ghastly town than any of those which had previously awakened his alarm, and that perhaps on the whole he had better take a villa residence at Constantinople or a kiosk (?) at Moscow after all.

Nor shall any cheering or encouraging aspect of any place or places (be they of the home, foreign, or colonial classes) be permitted; and whereas there exist in many minds impressions in connexion with certain things and places which are favourable to the same, and calculated to invest them with certain charms and attractions, there shall be on view, in different parts of the building called the Tristisseum, models or representations of such places and things, which shall daunt and scare the beholder, and destroy in a moment his previous conception of them. And this shall be especially the case with regard to a model which shall be erected of a Swiss cottage—a species of edifice viewed too favourably hitherto by the human race—and also with a certain view of a ruin called Netley Abbey, which has been likewise a favourite with the English public, but which must be so no longer. The said Swiss cottage especially shall be so constructed as to present a bleak, ghastly, and forbidding appearance, and shall be generally very terrible and discouraging to behold; and if the architect or builder shall be able so to devise the said cottage as that children of tender years shall scream on being taken into it, and that men of a sensitive and melancholic fibre shall sit down in dark corners of the same and inquire wherefore they were born,—if the said builder shall attain these objects he shall receive a pecuniary

reward, and shall also be permitted to occupy—rent free—a turn-up bedstead opposite the waterfall in the said Swiss cottage itself.

And because the pictures or panoramas, already spoken of as representing the leading capitals of Europe, shall be (however invested with horror) insufficient to terrify and dismay some of the bolder and more sanguine persons who may occasionally visit the Tristisseum, there shall be provided, in the very centre of the building, a certain small and circular chamber which shall ascend at certain hours to a gallery of a dark and terrible nature commanding a view of the said pictures or panoramas. And this said ascending chamber shall be provided with a seat extending round its whole circumference, on which the before-mentioned bold and sanguine persons shall be seated in a ring and facing each other, and there shall be six small and flickering oil-lamps in the ascending chamber which shall emit a great smell and but little light, though enough to enable those who are about to ascend to distinguish each other's features and to look in each other's faces for comfort, but to find none. Moreover the said ascending chamber shall, at its first rising, heave, and sway, and quake in such wise that those timid women and infants of tender years, whose presence is especially solicited, shall cry aloud with tears, and shall clamour to be liberated, but in vain. And it shall happen that this heaving, quaking, swaying, and rolling of the ascending chamber shall continue throughout its ascent, and shall be of such a nature that it shall cause many nipping and yearning throes and convulsions in the stomachs of those ascending, and shall be productive of sensations similar to those experienced by persons unaccustomed to the sea who find themselves on shipboard in rough and turbulent waters.

And since it hath been observed that the presence of sculpture in large quantities, and in plaster, is productive of an effect which is the reverse of exhilarating, there shall be in the Grecian Saloon, or Glyptotheque, of the Tristisseum, a redundancy of casts from such sculpture—antique and

modern—as hath been remarked to exercise the most chilling influence on those beholding and examining the same. And a certain dampness and miasmatic clammyness having been, as before shown, ordained to be cultivated in all parts of this institution, it shall also be discreetly introduced into the sculpture arrangements, even of the above-named Glyptotheque. And this shall be especially noticeable in the catalogue, which shall in the very first six items of its numerical list, contain no fewer than four allusions of a watery nature, as thus—No. 1. Going to the Bath;—No. 2. William IV.;—No. 3. Coming from the Bath;—No. 4. Bart., General Sir R. Ferguson;—No. 5. Boy and Frog—design for Fountain; and, No. 6. DELUGE. This is to be a specimen of the general arrangement to be observed; and it is further suggested that there should be many figures introduced draped with scarves, a form of garment more suggestive of cold than any other that hath been devised, and infinitely more so than none at all. And because no person hath ever derived any comfort from a contemplation of plaster Cupids, let such images abound, and meet the visitor's eye in all such parts of the Glyptotheque as shall be capable of accommodating them.

One more clause of this remarkable lease, and we have done with it. The exact wording of the document shall be given in this case, as the subject is very important:—'And WHEREAS it hath come to the knowledge of the noble society and guild called the London Misanthropic Society, that in spite of the provision of dulness and gloom set forth in the preceding paragraphs of this agreement, and which provision is on a scale which might be expected to satisfy the most exacting of audiences—that yet the moneys taken at the door of the building called the Tristisseum are insufficient for the maintenance of the said building, and wholly inadequate to the keeping up of the succession of entertainments hereinbefore specified, and WHEREAS it is the firm determination of the London Misanthropic Society, that the said building, and the said entertainment, shall be maintained and kept

up, whether duly supported and sustained by the public or not:—IT HATH THEREFORE BEEN RESOLVED AND DETERMINED by the aforesaid Society or guild, that a certain portion or portions of the moneys, profits, gains, and emoluments derived from another of their possessions or properties, to be hereinafter designated, shall be appropriated to the keeping up of the buildings, dwelling-apartments, theatres, saloons, lobbies, out-houses, dripping caverns, waterfalls, lonely pools, and all other parts and appurtenances of or belonging to the said Tristisseum, and also to the payment of the lecturers, givers of entertainments, singers of songs, welders of glass, and all other persons promoting the misery of the frequenters of the said Colosseum in due and fit proportion to the services rendered by all such persons to the honourable Society to whom the said Tristisseum of right belongs:—and WHEREAS it hath been decided that the funds to be appropriated to the above purposes shall be drawn from the said Society's richest and most profitable source of emolument and gain, which is above and beyond all others the entertainment called the Tussaud Collection in Baker Street—IT HATH THEREFORE BEEN DECREED, that such dividends or sums as may be required for the maintenance of the exhibitions and performances above described, shall be withdrawn from the profits of the said Tussaud Collection, and escheated to the said Tristisseum, and to the provision necessary for the maintenance of the same.'

Such is the lease (or such part of it as the E. W. thinks it necessary to extract) of the Colosseum. Shall these things go on, and shall the Misanthropic Society have it all its own way? Surely not. Let us consider the remedy. What a good thing it would be for certain establishments to be opened for the use of school-boys during the holidays, where the means for every kind of bodily exercise and amusement should be provided, and where they might spend the day innocuously to others, and profitably to themselves. By all means let this be carried out, and by all means let the Tristisseum be one of the first district branch boy depôts organised.

under the new system. How much employment might be furnished to the boys were the place taken for them as it now stands, and handed over to them just as it is! Yes, let the boys be loosened upon this place; let youths who are bringing up to the engineering profession see what they can do in the way of blasting the rocks of the Alpine department; let dumpy levels and theodolites be brought to bear; let them sap, and mine, and countermine; let them revel in fosse and counterscarp to their heart's content; let them assail the waterfall; let them turn it off, mop it up, staunch it, in any way that their ingenuity may suggest; let them besiege 'Paris by moonlight,' and reduce that city (it is nearly invisible already) to dust. Then for mere amusement, what a fund of diversion lurks for them in every nob, spike, recess, and projection of the stalactite caverns! Then the statues—what opportunities of mutilation are here! how many plaster noses invite the hammer! There is a colossal statue of the late Sir Robert Peel, which is so tall that the smiling Premier only just fits in under the ceiling of the corridor in which he stands. There's a deal of breaking in a statue like that, depend on it. Yes, let the boys be loosened on this grim and terrible place, and we shall do well yet. Let them drive the Misanthropic Society from this their chief stronghold, and then we will proceed to a consideration of other inroads upon their property, and other subtle and ingenious methods of loosening the hold which this deadly guild has got upon our injured and unresisting metropolis.

XVII.

HIS EVIDENCE REGARDING THE TASTING OF WINES, THE HOLDING OF WINE-GLASSES, THE TAPPING OF CASKS, THE INSERTING OF SPIGOTS, AND THE HATEFULNESS OF INTEMPERANCE; THE WHOLE OF THESE MATTERS BEING ELIMINATED BY, AND THROUGH, THE MEDIUM OF A VISIT TO THE LONDON DOCKS.

The Printer to the Reader.

THE subjoined report requires a word or two of explanation.

It was sent to the printing-office in the usual form; was printed, and corrected for publication, when a letter arrived from the Eye-witness couched in terms of great anxiety and alarm. He trusted it was not too late to cancel his report and substitute another, which he enclosed. The first, and that which he wished to be destroyed, was written, it appeared, on the evening of the day on which he had passed through the experience which it described, and he had reason to fear that it was not so intelligible as might have been wished. He had written this unlucky paper, it seemed, while suffering from a rather serious attack of indisposition; an indisposition of a very curious and alarming kind, too, the principal symptoms of which were a slight giddiness and confusion of the head, a great difficulty in the choice of terms, a singular facility in getting into sentences but an inconceivable inability to get out of them again. Nay, the unhappy gentleman goes so far as to say that this confusion and giddiness of head had reached so terrible a point at last that he was unable to find the opening of his inkstand when he wanted a fresh dip of the fluid which it contained, and that his pens became blunted at the points as fast as he took them up in consequence of their being brought in violent contact with the rim of his ink-bottle every time he made a plunge at that vessel. He adds that he is wholly unable to explain this attack. He had passed the day in visiting—with Eye-witnessing views—the London Docks, with a few friends and a 'tasting order;' he had returned in the evening, had

written his report of their expedition and sent it at once to the printing-office; but the next day, remembering the severe attack of illness under which he had been suffering while he prepared his article, it had occurred to him that the paper in question must have suffered from his indisposition, and consequently he wrote, as said above, to cancel it. The E. W. concludes his letter by saying that he has not been so ill since the night when his old friend Strongwaters was called to the Bar.

This communication from the Eye-witness arrived, unhappily, too late. His first report had been printed and irrevocably fixed in its place, and consequently the only thing left to be done was to introduce this word of explanation before it, and to subjoin the second report at the end of that which had been previously admitted.

The first document runs thus—

The Eye-witness is perfectly competent to send in his report. Who dares to say otherwise? Who dares to say that he is not in a condition to explain lucidly the present state of the wine trade? Who dares to say, or rather to insinuate, that your Servant going on a great and responsible mission of calm and judicial inquiry—going, in short, as an Eye-witness—could so far forget himself as to lose, even for a moment, that deep sense of duty, with which let those who are not impressed with the full measure of the responsibility which attaches to the position of a public servant say is other than one calculated to tame and subdue the most mercurial and careless spirits among us, and much more that, or rather those—*those*, let us repeat, of one who at all times and in all places, conscious that his object is the improvement, the instruction, and the amusement of his fellow-men, is never more so, and rarely so much so, as at a moment such as this which he is about to describe when plunging, for the benefit of others, into the bowels of the earth armed with a lantern and attended by a ministering gnome provided with a gimlet, wine-glasses, spigots and an adze (or cooper's axe), he wanders during many hours of a winter afternoon among casks, pipes,

butts, and many other appurtenances of the wine trade, as connected with the export and import of that which has been styled by one whom your Eye-witness is *not* the man to disparage, the enemy which—Oh! that a man should put it in his mouth to steal away his brains; not that it *does* steal away the brains of any but those who have but a small and feeble allowance of brains to steal; for has not your Eye-witness passed the whole day in tasting and swallowing—and how should he do otherwise than swallow it being too good to waste—the wine which his dear friends Beeswing and Crust furnished him with access to, accompanying him themselves one on each side, and providing him, as has been already stated, with a gnome who, furnished with a gimlet, would plunge the same into any cask, pipe, or butt before which your Servant chose to stop, and cause a beautiful stream of purple or amber-coloured liquid as the case might be to pour forth, which being caught in a glass of great size and allowed to play upon it for a while in order to clean it outside and in, as the frequenters of drinking fountains cleanse the leaden stoup out of which they are going to drink, only in this case it is cleansed with precious wine and in the other with inexpensive water, and then handing the wine-glass so prepared and filled with wine of inconceivable merit, and not holding it by the stem but by the flat bottom on which it stands when it is put down, and it is impossible to put it down till you have drunk what it holds because there are nothing but round casks to put it down upon and the wine-glass will not stand upon a round surface, for your Eye-witness tried it and broke four glasses in his attempts to steady them,—but what he wishes to say is that this man handing him incessantly those glasses full of ports, sherries, and madeiras, which last is the favourite wine of your Servant, albeit a liquor which being but a poor man, to whom the luxuries indulged in by the rich and powerful are little known, is one that he seldom tastes, and indeed so much the better for being of a gouty habit, and his great-grandfather by the mother's side, whose name was Chalkstones, died of

that disease, and if any body reading these words and wishing to send a present of wine to the writer will please to make it sherry he will greatly oblige. Well, this man, handing him as has been said, continually glasses of these wines one after another in rapid succession, has yet disproved this which the poet, whom your Eye-witness is *not* the man to disparage, has called an enemy which steals away the brains of him who puts it in his mouth, but which is so little so in reality that though taken into his mouth in such large quantities as hinted at above, it has yet so little stolen away his brains that he is able, as the reader can see, to write his report as usual.

Now to begin a fresh sentence, the above being rather a long one, and to prove more completely that your Eye-witness is in a fit and proper condition for the discharge of his duty, let us go into this matter methodically, and considering the question as one of figures let us proceed to calculate that since the whole area or surface covered by the vault called the East Vault alone is at least 11 miles, or rather acres, and that it contains 50,000 pipes of wine; and that in another department of the same building there are 31 vats, one of which, to take a specimen, contains 8,216 gallons, and another 10,000 gallons, and supposing that five parties per day visit these vaults, and that each party consists of four persons and that each person drinks 50 glasses of wine, and that for each glass of wine drunk there are two wasted in the cleansing of the glass outside and in with wine as before described, and in the quantity which emerges after the withdrawal of the gimlet, and before the presentation of the glass and after the removal of the glass and before the introduction of the spigot, we get a result of 200, or 400, or perhaps 800 glasses of wine wasted per day; and though in the figures just quoted there is a great discrepancy, and it may be asked by the reader whether it is 200 or 800 glasses of wine that are wasted, it is contended that that part of the question is immaterial, the great object being to show that there is waste, and the proverb being waste not want not, and your Servant hopes that Messrs. Firkin and Stoup, or

rather Beeswing and Crust, will not want, and that your Eye-witness may ne'er want a friend or a bottle to give him—and may the present moment be the least happy—but this is wandering from our subject, which was one of a statistical and numerical, and not a convivial nature, and there must be wine enough wasted here to supply a hospital, and let our authorities look to it; and what a good plan it would be to catch it in receptacles placed for the purpose—and if your Servant was Firkin or Stoup, or Beeswing and Crust, or both or either, as he is not—worse luck—but were he, he would organise some such system, and taking care not to mix the wines would bottle them and send them to deserving friends, who might or might not be Eye-witnesses, and who may or may not be in a low condition as to their cellars, but who scorn to give hints and so there the matter drops, and we come back again to a practical and calm consideration of the subject once more, and a great deal of valuable information your Eye-witness would be able to give, but that it unfortunately happens that he is unable for some reason or other, but he does not know what, to decipher the notes which he made at great length while in the bowels of the earth; the writing in which the said notes are recorded being indistinct and illegible, which is probably attributable to his having had to hold an umbrella, a lamp, a pair of gloves and a wine-glass all the time that he was writing, and the lamp was a tin one with dints in it placed at the end of a long stick and looking, in shape, like a flesh-brush, and therefore it is surely not surprising, but quite the reverse, that the notes of your Servant should be difficult to read, and that D. 41, 42, 43, should be the only one he is able to make out; and he wonders what this means, and if any gentleman could help him he would be much obliged: and if the wine trade would please to come forward and throw some light, were it but the smallest glimmer, upon the subject they would be conferring a favour; also if they would tell him (for he has forgotten) how many million miles of tram-way are laid down on these vaults for the casks to roll over; they are very good things

too for the visitors to the casks to roll over, for they project above the level of the ground, and trip you up just as is the case with the cradles on which the casks are placed, and which, sticking out at unexpected corners, were the cause of several accidents to your Eye-witness.

Your Servant is surprised and annoyed to find, what he has never observed in connexion with any of his previous experiences, that there are curious and unaccountable blank spaces in his memory as to some portion of the time which he spent within the walls of the London Docks. It is not as if he had forgotten what took place during those periods, but rather as if they had not been. It appears to your Servant that at such moments he was obliterated. He was obliterated then opposite the last cask of sherry which he experimented upon. There is probably some miasma in these vaults caused by the fungoid matter overhead, or by the fumes of mingled wine and sawdust under foot, which is the reason of this obliteration. At all events it was so, the giving up of his lamp, the emerging from the vaults, the ascending of the steps which conduct to the level of the earth, all these things are obliterated. After this ascent an extremely interesting discussion took place between your Eye-witness and Messrs. Beeswing and Crust (who argued across your Servant) on the derivation of the word 'sack,' sherry-sack. It was contended that it was got from '*sec*' in the French; but how this was finally decided—is obliterated. Some very valuable wine statistics were also at this time given to your Eye-witness by his two entertainers, he remembers the fact that they were communicated, that they were interesting, that they were invaluable—but they are obliterated. The numbers partially remain, but whether they are millions or thousands is the circumstance which is obliterated. The miasma of the East Vault is a terrible and dangerous thing, let the reader beware of it. It is pregnant with vertigo, confusion, blankness, and, in short, with obliteration.

But though there is mist over the docks, though facts of

your Servant's experience on the day of his visit waver before his memory, and though they are seen as in a dream, yet your Eye-witness knows perfectly, mind you, what he was about. He knows that on coming up from among the vats he ascended instantly the side of an American liner, that he sought for information from a sweet-tempered and gentlemanly negro, who referred him to a chief officer who was a savage, and to whom your Servant spoke his mind and gave his opinion on the subject of the law as regards the ex—the ex—the ex-tra-dish—ex-tra-dition of criminals. He told him in so many words that cases are within everybody's recollection of barbarities practised by American sailors on each other, or on the unhappy negroes who are in their power which fill us with a righteous but impotent indignation, especially when one reads that the perpetrators of these crimes are discharged by our magistrates unpunished, because the offence was committed upon the high seas, and not within a certain distance of the English shores. He told him—what did he tell him? He told him of the full measure of disgrace which these instances of national ferocity unparalleled in any other civilised community cast upon the name of Columbia. He told him that these things are so common, are of so constant a recurrence, and are so identified with the American banner, that we of the old world are beginning to be ashamed of our own share in the origin of the new; that the stars and stripes of their flag, as it shows in our ports, is so associated with pain, and bloodshed, and cruelty, and with them alone, that we begin to shudder at the sight of it; and that many wise heads in this, the mother-country, are occupied with sad speculations as to what this extraordinary natural savageness and ferocity of disposition is attributable to, and whether there is some fixed and deadly element in their character which neither time, nor teaching, nor the example of other nations can change, whether it is that they are the offspring of our age, and are sour and crabbed by reason of the unwholesomeness of their constitution, weak and puny as an old man's last-begotten child, whether it is bad

for a nation to have grown up suddenly, to have begun as men without a previous passage through the various stages of child and boy to manhood, whether mixing a race (for of how many bloods are they a compound?) is like mixing wines and leads to fermentation, disturbance, and fever, whether—

Sudden oblivion again. The chief officer's eye lowering upon your Eye-witness, departure from the ship—but how?

Turning up again in the spice department, among bales of cinnamon, and arsenals of nutmegs. The reader will not expect anything on such a subject as spice. What does he care for spice? Your Eye-witness *might* enlighten him with a great deal of information upon this matter, but to what purpose. There was indeed an anecdote related in connexion with certain bales of cinnamon which were packed in some peculiar manner which your E. W. does not remember, and which were so packed for some particular purpose which has escaped him, and with a view to re-exportation to some part of the globe, the name of which he is unable to recall. Your Servant merely recollects that it was a very amusing story, and that it was told him by an elderly gentleman named Brackenbury, or Watts, it is immaterial which, but it was one of the two. He recollects all this, but owing to the effects of the atmosphere in the East Vault, he remembers nothing more.

And what right has the world to expect more? Are we the slaves of the lamp, to be always working and never enjoying ourselves? Are we, I say—I mean the Eye-witness says, for am I not writing in the third person, and I wish I wasn't—are we to be for ever slaving and toiling? . . .

Have not all our great men been at times ready to relax over their wine? Was not Sherry-dan fond of a glass? And because thou art virtuous, are there to be no more cakes and ale? . . .

And if your Eye-witness chooses for once in a way . . . it's a poor heart that never rejoices—and what's that?—Oh, the printer's boy in the passage is it? Well give him that then, and tell him—tell them—tell them to mind how they

print it—and—to be partic . . . careful what they are about, and to abstain from fermented liquors . . . and in short there's an end of it—and it's time to go to bed.

Such is the first report sent in by our Eye-witness. It is printed without comment. The severest censure upon the report, as it ought *not* to be, is furnished by the report as it ought to be, which is here subjoined.

The present report of the Eye-witness is the result of a suggestion from without. It is upon a subject to which your Servant's attention was directed by a friend, who knowing well the characteristics of the scene to which he invited the attention of the E. W., pressed strongly on his notice the claims which the London Docks as explorable by means of a 'tasting order,' might legitimately lay to be Eye-witnessed.

Ever open to conviction, ever ready to take a hint, your Servant at once appointed a day for the purpose, and started for the City on this vinous mission, and with a vague idea pervading his system that he was going to do something remotely connected in some mysterious manner with the budget and the treaty of commerce. Your Eye-witness began by exploring the private cellarage of Messrs. Beeswing and Crust, the gentlemen by favour of whom the tasting order above alluded to was to be provided. To one unaccustomed to such matters the underground resources possessed by this firm, on their own premises, were sufficiently surprising, and your Servant found himself so much interested in the remains of an old convent wall belonging once to the church, hardly, and also possibly in a very curious sherry to which his attention was especially solicited, that he experienced a considerable difficulty in persuading himself to leave this pleasant retreat when the moment came for proceeding to the docks. The convent wall just spoken of forms now an integral portion of Messrs. Beeswing's wine-cellar and, used as a *prop or* lean-to for pipes of tawny port to

lean their drowsy heads against, is a very remarkable and interesting relic.

Before him who enters the London Docks with credentials from the firm of Beeswing and Crust, the doors of the great vaults fly open, and the servants of the Dock Company do obeisance. To him the gates of the great cellars are thrown wide; and as, when he has descended the requisite number of steps, these gates close behind him again, he feels that a Silenus-like smile is creeping over his countenance, and that his good principles are suddenly being shaken to their very centre. It is an atmosphere of conviviality. The huge professional wine-glasses, solid in the stem, vast in the bowl, but slightly contracted at the mouth, as if to keep in the liquor which unsteady hands might otherwise spill; the smell of acres of sawdust well saturated with wine itself; the aspect of the vault with its vistas of casks extending in the darkness further than the eye can reach, and its festoons of fungoid cobweb hanging from the roof like a soft and comfortable form of stalactite; the very attendant arming himself briskly with a gimlet, an adze, a bundle of spigots, and a bunch of wine-glasses, held downwards like a peal of bells; the long flat stick with the tin oil-lamp at the end of it which is handed to you, and which itself has a convivial and unprincipled look, the tin of which it is made being full of bulges like a hat which has been in a row: all these things seem in so many words to say, 'You are come down here to be jolly; you have shut out the world, my boy, and all your cares along with it, and though these last are extremely affable, and will kick their heels outside as long as you like to keep them, rather than not be there to greet you at your exit, you may yet give them the slip now for an hour or two, and have a frisk for once in spite of them.'

As you advance and plunge deeper into the bowels of the earth, you are struck with what at this time of year you were not at all prepared for—the warmth. Shivering in the north wind outside, which crept in under his greatcoat, and

nestled among his ribs, your Eye-witness had anticipated with shudders a chill reception in these vaults. No such thing; the temperature is uniformly kept at from 55 to 60 degrees winter and summer, and is, in spite of the damp, extremely comfortable.

The party of which your Eye-witness formed one, consisted of the two friends (both representatives of the distinguished firm to which allusion has already been made), under whose guidance the E. W. had placed himself; a man who was one of several inhabiting the vaults, and rarely appearing above the earth level, a kind of Bacchic gnome; and your poor Servant and Emissary, the compiler of this report. Without guidance it would be perfectly easy to lose oneself in these vistas of barrels, which are all exactly alike, and though in the case of the East Vault these gangways are dimly lighted with oil lamps, and numbered; these numbers would only be intelligible to the men who are accustomed to them, and would afford little assistance to the uninitiated voyager.

The effects of light and shade in this great crypt of the temple of Silenus are often very fine. Sometimes you see a peep of daylight stealing through some cranny from above, and sometimes as you look down one of the side alleys which diverge from the main thoroughfare, you get a glimpse of other groups similar to that of which you form a part, who are probably similarly employed, and who in the distance, and dimly lighted by their feeble lamps, look like convivial imitators of Guy Fawkes. Occasionally, too, you meet with a party of the Bacchic gnomes before alluded to, wandering about on some mission, the object of which does not appear; perhaps it might be remotely connected with exploits of the kind recently made public in our law courts. The facilities for tampering with the wine in Dock appear to an uninitiated visitor to be very great, and the system of supervision on a singularly slender scale.

But by far the most remarkable thing in connection with these vaults is the extraordinary growth, spoken of above, of

a certain fungoid substance which hangs in the strangest forms, and in immense masses from the roof. The men who live in the place seem to be rather proud of this fungus; it is never interfered with, and they point out any larger mass than usual which you meet with, with some complacency. It begins in an incrustation perfectly white and resembling cotton wool, which forms on the brick-work of the vault, and, as it grows, descends in irregular forms, hanging down a foot or two in length. Sometimes also one of these masses is continued, and either by joining itself to another, or being taken up again to the roof, forms itself into a garland or festoon. These growths have invariably, however, by the time they have attained any length, lost their brilliant whiteness, and being turned to a dingy dirt colour, are wholly without beauty. However large these masses of fungus are, they are always entirely soft and light, so that if you blow at one of them, or fan it with your hat, it will sway and waver in the air like gossamer. Viewed carelessly, and by the extremely dim light, the ceiling of these vaults presents a patchy and bulbous look, which carries out the convivial aspect of the place, and suggests that the vaults themselves have taken to drinking, and have got blotchy and bepimpled in consequence. It is a curious circumstance in connection with this incrustation that it never grows in any cellar but one devoted to wine.

Passing down the avenues of casks, all of which are ornamented with numerous hieroglyphics indicating the names of their proprietors, the date of the vintage of the wine inside, the period of its arrival at the Docks, and the name of the ship in which it made its voyage—passing down these thoroughfares, one after another, your Eye-witness is presently arrested by his companions before a cask on whose head the letters B and C, and the figures 8—4—51, are inscribed.

'Let us try this,' says Mr. Beeswing.

'It is '50 Port,' adds Mr. Crust.

Your Eye-witness has heard of '50 Port, and is anxious to

taste it. He looks on, then, in admiration while the gnome who is in attendance performs the following manœuvres, all executed very smartly, and perhaps with a trifle of ostentation. First he places his lamp upon the ground, then he selects one of the wine-glasses from the 'peal' before described; then he looks at the point of his gimlet; then he politely requests the E. W. to stand on one side; and then flies at the cask. The gimlet is into it and out again in no time, and the jet of wine, which your Servant was told to stand aside that he might avoid, bursts out in a purple arch, which has its origin at the gimlet-hole, and its termination in the sawdust. Into this beautiful *wine-bow*, the gnome now plunges the glass which he has selected. The invaluable liquor plays upon it outside and in, and the vessel is thoroughly rinsed and cleaned WITH WINE. Then, and not till then, the glass is allowed to fill, and the gnome having handed it to your Eye-witness, holding it by the pedestal on which it stands, mind you, and never by the stem, proceeds to fill other glasses for Messrs. Beeswing and Crust, and finally choosing (he is in no hurry) a spigot from those in his hand, presses it into the hole, and to the great relief of your Servant, the stream of wine which has been flowing all this time is at last dammed up.

Your Eye-witness does at Rome what the Romans do, so when the glass of wine is handed to him held by its pedestal, it is the pedestal that he takes it by, and is just putting it to his lips when he is suddenly checked.

'Stop,' cries Mr. Beeswing, who has been holding his wine with the lamp close behind it.

'Don't drink it,' vociferates Mr. Crust, who has been subjecting his liquor to a similar test; and before your Servant knows what has happened, his glass is taken from him, politely but firmly, and its contents are poured upon the sawdust. 'Aie!' cries your Servant.

'A little thick,' says Mr. Beeswing, mysteriously.

'Decidedly cloudy,' adds Mr. Crust. 'Try that one,' he adds to the gnome, pointing to a cask close by, whose hiero-

glyphics are precisely similar to those upon the barrel which has just been experimented upon. 'Try that one,' says Mr. Crust.

'That one' is tried by exactly the same process which was employed in the case just described, and the wine being pronounced by Messrs. Beeswing and Crust, unanimously, to be in perfect order, your Eye-witness is permitted to become a mouth-witness of its quality; and on removing the glass empty from his lips is gently reproved by his entertainers for the irreverent haste with which he has swallowed his liquor, and initiated by them in the real art of drinking a glass of wine.

Let no man suppose that he knows how to drink a glass of wine till he has passed through a curriculum of Dock studies, and has matriculated in the East Vault. There are doubtless those who would tell you that drinking a glass of wine is one of the simplest things conceivable. These misguided persons imagine that all you have to do is to take hold of the glass, convey it promptly to your lips and drain the contents. Heaven help the innocence of those who imagine that this is all! Let us hasten the work of their enlightenment. He who designs to take his glass of wine in the manner of an amateur or judge must go to work in a manner very different from the flippantly brisk treatment of the subject hinted at just above. He must beware also of any theatrical tendencies in this matter. This is none of your pasteboard flagon affairs. There is no waving of wine-cups above your head, nor subsequent drinking so rapid as to carry out the hideous idea suggested by the waving process—that the flagon itself is empty. In fact all light comedy is to be eschewed, and the following grave course of proceeding is to be closely attended to. First of all, it is necessary that the wine-taster should look to the attitude of his whole body, which is to be done in this wise. He is to stand with his weight equally divided on both legs, and with his feet close together. He is then to lean his body slightly forward, in the manner of a gentleman who is eating a juicy

peach, and who has a regard for the breast of his coat. Next, he is to square his elbows and to take hold of the wine-glass, not by the stem, but, as has been already mentioned, by the pedestal, holding it somewhat loosely between the fore-finger and thumb. These things done, he is next to attend to the expression of his countenance, which is to be that of a gentleman of a suspicious nature, and incapable of being taken in. Let us now recommend our wine-taster to apply the light test, and to hold his glass up to lamp or window, as the case may be, in order that he may get a notion of its transparency. Having done this, the monosyllable hum! may be softly and slowly allowed to pass from the amateur's lips. It is a good phrase, and unless he frowns, which it is not at present desirable that he should do, unless the wine is obviously thick, he commits himself to nothing. The eye test having now been applied, we should next recommend a recourse to the organ of smell, and here (there is no doubt of it) a slight frown may, under any circumstances, be judiciously allowed to distort the features. At this point, too, he is to put his head a little on one side, to put his nose very near the mouth of his glass, and to sniff sharply and irritably two or three times. Let it be owned that we are working our amateur a little hard, yet this is nothing to what is before him when he once gets the wine to his lips. It is then—it is at the moment of raising his wine-glass to his mouth—that the taster is to commence a system of harassment with regard to the owner of the wine, which is to know no limit, and which no humane or friendly considerations are to be allowed to mitigate. Retaining the slight frown used in the nose test, our amateur is now recommended to 'fix' his entertainer with a pitiless glare—not, however, turning his face towards him, but, on the contrary, getting it a little away from his victim, and regarding him (even if he is his dearest friend) suspiciously out of the corner of his eye. There will be no harm at this stage in the proceedings in making two or three 'offers' at the wine before sipping it. This is, on the contrary, a course strongly to be recom-

mended, as it suggests that really your mouth is too serious a property to be treated lightly, and that you must think twice before calling its attention to a wine that may be a failure.

At the tremendous moment when the first sip of wine actually passes our amateur's lips, he must, on peril of losing the whole of the prestige gained for him by a careful attention to all that has gone before, withdraw the glass smartly from his mouth, and look down at it as if it had offended him. Then his glance, having gained new strength by this relaxation, must be brought swiftly back to his entertainer's countenance, and a look of malignant penetration must be screwed out of it that shall find its way into that sufferer's inmost vitals. The mouth must now be stretched as nearly as possible across the face, the lips being compressed to a degree that renders them invisible, and tightly closed. They remain there only, however, for a moment, and are almost instantaneously pushed out till they are on a level with the tip of the nose. The lips, retained still in this position, are next to be moved slowly from side to side, and occasionally, by a use of the muscle called '*orbicularis oris*,' are to be made to revolve, which it will be found adds great effect to the air of dark mistrust hitherto expressed only by the eyes. The whole of these exercises having been got through, and repeated several times, the wine may be at last—if the taster cannot resist it—swallowed, but it will be more effective if he rejects it after all, and spits it out upon the ground.

The man who can enact the whole of this performance correctly, and can be guaranteed against a smile throughout it—this man, and this man only, can be really said to know how to drink a glass of wine. Let us return to the vats.

The '50 Port having been satisfactorily disposed of, the little party of which your E. W. was one moved on to other parts of the vaults, and passed to a consideration of those fine dry Sherries and rich Madeiras in which the inhabitants of our island especially revel—when they can get them. At

every stoppage for tasting purposes precisely the same ceremonial which was gone through in connexion with the '50 Port took place—including very often the throwing away the contents of the glasses—over and over again. Your Eye-witness, however, was prudence itself, and knowing that he had duties to attend to after leaving the Docks, confined himself to one glass of Madeira (now raging in his left great toe) and another of a very curious amontillado called the Queen of Spain, a wine calculated to reconcile one to that monarch in a remarkable degree. Between all these sips a certain paper of biscuits brought for the purpose was resorted to to keep the mouth in tasting order, and to prevent the fumes of the wine from rising to the head. It was perfectly successful in both these respects—especially the last.

How delightful is temperance! For one moment knowing himself to be surrounded by delicious wines in all directions, your Eye-witness felt a deadly temptation to exceed. He resisted it, however, and with a clear head and all his faculties about him, he knew the truth of that remarkable adage which tells us that virtue is its own reward. In consequence of his moderation and self-denial, your Servant is in a position to give to the reader some valuable information which he gained from the gentlemen by whom he was accompanied, and of the accuracy of which he feels confident from the fact that he made notes at the time, from which he is now quoting.

The recent cases which have been brought before the public notice, in which it has been tolerably evident that the wines left in the vaults at the London Docks have been tampered with, may have caused some of your readers to ask how it is that the different wine merchants in London do not keep their stock in some warehouses of their own, and under their own supervision, in which case such frauds would be impossible. The answer to this question is simple enough. The wine has to be kept for years after its arrival in this country before it is required, therefore, if the merchant were to pay the duty, which he must do if he wants to take his

wine away, he would be during all these years losing the interest of his money. While the wine remains at the Docks it pays no duty, consequently, during all the time that it is there going through its maturing process, the possessor of it is able to keep his money and make use of it. Private bonded warehouses, where the wine would be exempt from duty, are only allowed within 400 yards of the river. The shipping expenses connected with them are very heavy. There are very few merchants whose stock would be enough for one, and of course if two or three took one of them together they would be liable to robbery from each other's servants. There is little doubt but that hereafter, when the duty is reduced to one shilling or eighteenpence per gallon instead of five and ninepence, the merchants will keep larger stocks of duty-paid wine than they do at present, as the loss of the interest on the money then would be very inconsiderable in proportion to the Dock charges. These last are very high, sixpence per week being required for every pipe of wine that lies in the vaults. Some notion may be formed of what these Dock charges amount to in the course of the year, when it is mentioned that the firm of Beeswing and Crust, to whom the Eye-witness owes his information, pays to the different dock companies a sum varying from £12,000 to £14,000 per annum.

It is a startling thing, and gives one some notion of what commerce is in this country, to visit such places as the London Docks and see the scale of everything around one. The entire space enclosed within the domain of the Company is no less than 91 acres. Of this the water area alone is 34½ acres, while the quay-room, alongside which vessels may lie, occupies 11,115 feet. The contents of the different warehouses and sheds amount to 230,000 tons, and there is vault accommodation for wines and spirits capable of holding 87,000 pipes. An idea having thus been been given of the amount of space appropriated to the London Docks and its out-buildings, it remains to give the reader some notion also of the wealth contained in the different warehouses and

vaults; which may be done, not to frighten the reader with figures, in but one or two quotations. The estimated value of goods of various kinds landed in the London Docks in the course of one year (1850) was £13,518,107. The worth of the wines and spirits landed in that year alone was £2,964,250, the rest was made up by the value of the tobacco, sugar, tea, coffee, and other goods which entered the Docks. Now let us see what Government gets out of all this. On those wines and spirits the estimated value of which has just been given, a duty was at that time exacted amounting to £4,253,977, which is very nearly twice the worth of the goods themselves, while on the whole contents of the Docks the excise charge reached the enormous sum of £13,727,390. And this let the reader remember was the amount of revenue gained from only one of the numerous docks at which excisable goods, brought to this country, are landed.

The space occupied by the London Docks seems now larger than is required. Your Eye-witness was struck with this, both in the vaults dedicated to wine, and subsequently in the ware-rooms devoted to tobacco. The men belonging to this latter department, when questioned what had become of the stores which used to lie there, replied that they were 'down at the Vic'; and indeed there is no reason to doubt that the new Victoria Docks, for which the abbreviation just quoted is the slang name, must have done considerable injury to the old Docks. It is not impossible, as has been already hinted, that a reduction of the duty on wines will hurt them still more, and that they must suffer by many of the results of that system of substituting direct for indirect taxation, which seems to find favour in the eyes of our modern financialists. In every great change somebody goes to the wall; and what is play to one set of people, is death to others.

There is a good deal of waste, as it seems to the observer from outside, in the different departments of these Docks. Not only is there a waste of wine, which surely might be very easily avoided, and which must amount in the course of the

year to some hundreds of bottles, but in the tobacco region the same want of economy is remarkable. The amount of liquor saved in the course of the year in a London gin-palace, by the contrivance there adopted for collecting the *drippings of the glasses*, has often been quoted, and never without astonishing those before whom the figures are placed. Were a similar carefulness shown to make the most of everything in these London Docks, some startling results would doubtless be obtained. The institution called the 'Queen's Tobacco-pipe' was out of order when your Eye-witness paid his visit to the tobacco-region of the Docks, but he was told concerning it that it was a great kiln, into which the damaged tobacco was thrown to be destroyed by burning. It would be well if our consumers of cheap cigars never got any worse tobacco than this which is burnt up; and it would be well if our poor friends who buy an ounce of tea at a time, never took away in their screw of paper a worse article than that which, condemned as 'damaged,' is sent out in lighters to the mouth of the river and pitched into the sea!

Your Eye-witness, in his visit to the Docks, confined himself entirely to the wine-vaults and the tobacco and spice departments. Concerning the first of these—a legitimate prey to Excise—it may be observed that the difference between the value of the thing itself, and the sum charged as a duty, is even more remarkable than in the case of the wine and spirit tax. On the £589,780 worth of tobacco, imported at the London Docks in the year 1850, no less a sum was exacted than £6,935,812, before the fumes of this popular drug was allowed to arrive at the nostrils of the public.

There are many things connected with the commercial world that strike the non-commercial world with astonishment. There are few persons who, entering the Spice depôt of the London Docks, would fail to be surprised at the amount of cinnamon and nutmegs imported at this single place of debarcation. Heaven help us! one would have said that one bale of cinnamon would be enough for the whole of England

for ever. There are 8000 imported here annually: of these, however, about 7500 are re-exported again, and principally to Spain. The Spaniards, it appears, make an enormous use of cinnamon in the manufacture of chocolate; and as they are—like other foreign nations—extremely averse to parting with money, they prefer coming to this country for their cinnamon to importing it themselves from Ceylon; the reason being, that in the latter case they would have to pay for it in coin, while here they get it in exchange for wines and fruits and other Spanish produce.

After wandering for some time among the cinnamon groves, the attention of your Eye-witness was attracted to certain bales differently packed from the rest, and of larger and more cumbersome proportions. On asking the Superintendent of the department—a very intelligent and humorous old gentleman named Parker—what was the destination of these bales, and why they were packed differently from the others about the place, your Eye-witness was put in possession of the following particulars, to which your Servant begs now to call the attention of those foreign authorities whom the matter concerns.

'These, sir,' said the Superintendent, pointing to the packages in question, 'these, are some bales of cinnamon done up ready to be shipped for Pernambuco or Mexico; and you wouldn't believe, sir, unless you was to see it, how those bales are packed. The South Americans, who are under a very heavy duty on imported cinnamon, send over to us in a private way an order for a certain number of bales, each of which is to be rolled up first of all in a blanket, then in two tarpaulins, and then in matting over all. Well, sir, I obey the order, and it isn't for me to inquire *why* the cinnamon is to be so packed. I know, certainly, that in the course of the voyage, with the heat and one thing or another, those tarpaulins get fused into a kind of solid waterproof case round the cinnamon; but it isn't for me to suppose that, when the ship gets near to land, those bales are chucked overboard, and that then the Pernambucans, or Mexicans, or

whoever they may be, are to go out quietly in boats and pick them up. It isn't for me to think that the bales are thus carefully packed, and that the tarpaulins are clapped on over all, in order that the cinnamon mayn't be spoiled when the packages are thrown into the sea. Blankets are very much wanted over there—and so, may be, is tarpaulin. I only do as I'm bid; and if they sent word over that the cinnamon was to be wrapped up in ladies' ball-dresses, and paid the money, why I should obey 'em, sir.'

There is, surely, all over the world, an innate sympathy with smuggling; and the gentleman whose half-notes the Chancellor of the Exchequer is always acknowledging in the Times, would, doubtless, on his return from the Rhine, use every dodge in his power to hide his Eau-de-Cologne from the Custom-house officers.

XVIII.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE SPRIGHTLY GENIUS AND THE DARING ORIGINALITY EXHIBITED IN OUR LONDON STATUES.

It is not long since that a gentleman of great legal experience rose in the House of Commons, and invited the attention of the government to a certain monumental structure, at the lower end of Waterloo Place, which consisting at that time of boards and scaffolding poles only, was calculated to gratify the beholders with a prospective, rather than a present enjoyment; and which, while rich in future promise, was in the matter of immediate satisfaction, a thought sterile and discouraging. Reading of this learned member's question, and of the answer made to it, which—as has happened occasionally in other matters connected with government—consisted of an assurance that it was all right, and that there was nobody to blame; reading of these things, it naturally suggested itself that it would be a good and interesting thing to examine the comparative merits of a London scaffolding, and a London statue, with a view to ascertaining whether on

the whole the former is not the more ornamental structure of the two, and whether the legal gentleman who put the question spoken of above, had not better have borne those ills he has, in the shape of the boards and poles, than fly to others that he knows not of in bronze or marble.

A good scaffolding is a very perfect and complete work of art. It is a fair specimen of human ingenuity, and in its admirable adaptation to the end for which it is used, in its full achievement of what it professes, is perfectly satisfactory. Who is there that remembers the structure by which the Nelson column was placed in its present position, and will not admit that that symmetrically balanced composition with its invisible joints, its wonderful combination of strength with lightness, and its graceful intricacy of spars, was a much more agreable object of contemplation than the inconceivably foolish result which it was raised to bring into existence? Yes, a scaffolding is an inferior thing to *a good* statue, but it is infinitely superior in beauty to a bad one. Who would not be grateful to any combination of boards that would environ and screen from our miserable eyes the arch at the top of Constitution Hill, and its incredibly terrible burden? Who would not be glad of *anything* behind which the statue of Sir Charles Napier, or that raised in Cavendish Square to the memory of my Lord Bentinck could be secreted? Is the Jenner monument as good as a scaffolding? Is the august form of our late sovereign William IV., (of glorious memory,) as it appears in the street named after him, anything like as beautiful as the deal boards that might be at this moment around it, if government was true to itself, and when it has got an agreeable arrangement of wood-work raised in a telling situation, would leave well alone, and keep it there?

As a nation we are admirable at a scaffolding. There is perhaps no country that can beat us at such erections. Why not then, as is the course of sensible men—who find out what they can do, and do it—why not act thus nationally, and erect a scaffolding whenever we wish to commemorate a public event, or to raise a monument to a public character?

'Subscriptions will be received at the bank of Messrs. Hoarding and Son, towards the expenses of raising a scaffolding to commemorate the noble reign of the late Lord Mayor, "whoever that might be." This work of art will come from the atelier of Mr. Cubitt, and will be a fine specimen of the ability of that distinguished artist.' Surely such an announcement would be the signal for the collection of an enormous fund. What a relief, too, this system of raising monuments in wood and cordage, instead of bronze and stone, would be to the minds of our great public characters! It is a fact not generally known that this anticipation of what will happen after their deaths in the monumental way is continually preying on the minds of our more distinguished soldiers and politicians; and that when Lord John Russell is observed to wear a clouded and thoughtful brow as he sits in his place in Parliament, it is not that he is occupied with Reform, but with the miserable figure that he will cut in after ages, when occupying one of the vacant pedestals in Trafalgar Square.

Who knows how many illustrious persons are kept back by this dread of posthumous perpetuation, or what valuable services we are losing by reason of the dread which exists in men's minds of figuring one day at the top of a pillar, or alongside of the pump in the square! The risk of such ultimate honours is enough to deter any man from a public career. How dearly were the glories of the late Duke of Wellington purchased at the expense of such suffering as he must have endured every time he looked out of window, or passed the Royal Exchange on his way to London Bridge! We cannot expect people to run these risks; and many a rising man turns his attention to trade or stock-broking, or, which is safer still, to the fine arts, rather than to war or politics, with the dread of a Trafalgar Square statue before his eyes.

It is proposed by your Eye-witness to take a rapid glance at the statues with which our town is ornamented, with a view of ascertaining what is the exact amount of their claim on our admiration, and of their superiority to those wooden

structures which we are in such a hurry to get rid of. Before, however, making these researches, it is only right to premise that no critical mention will be made of the foxhunter on horseback in Mr. Nicoll's shop-window, nor of any of those statues of Highlanders which guard the doors of our more ancient snuff-shops.

Does any one get any satisfaction out of the London statues? Does any one ever look at them? Surely not. The fact is, that till lately it has been the practice to erect these monuments on such exalted pedestals, that it was impossible to see them, by reason of the brightness of the sky behind their faces. The likenesses of George Canning in front of Westminster Hall, and of Mr. Pitt in Hanover Square, are both invisible from this cause, and as to Nelson and the Duke of York, they may see each other it is true, being about on a level, but to the world at large their countenances are as those of veiled prophets, inscrutable in an aërial perspective of smoke and mist. These two pillar-saints (as St. Simeon Stylites, and others of similar habits with the Duke of York and Nelson, were called) have decidedly the best of it up in the clouds, and the others given over to the blacks and the dust, enjoy it must be confessed but a sorry time of it.

Perhaps the most lamentable and disheartening thing of all in connexion with the London statues is the conviction, which must force itself on every observer, of their certain gradual deterioration. Who that traces them down from the equestrian figure of Charles the First at Charing Cross to that of Queen Anne in front of St. Paul's, and (still descending) by the gallant old Hanoverian in Cockspur Street, to the unspeakable horrors of Trafalgar Square and Constitution Hill, can fail to own this? There is a sure but terrible progress in crime ending in abysses almost too low to contemplate. Nemo repente turpissimus; and no nation could *suddenly* be guilty of the statue of Napier in our metropolitan forum. That last stage has been approached slowly through many steps in villany, and the final degrada-

tion has been attained by a gradual process which your Servant has it in his thoughts to trace.

With the exception of those figures which, being let into niches, form rather a part of our street architecture than assert themselves as independent features of metropolitan decoration, with the exception of these—the equestrian Charles the First at the top of Parliament Street is the earliest of the London out-door statues; the earliest and the best. It is what it professes to be, a portrait of the king on horseback. In subsequent times a Roman madness came upon us, and took such hold of us too, that no man was represented as he was, but was tortured into the most Roman aspect that his features would (or wouldn't) admit of. Charles the First at Charing Cross is dressed as he *was* dressed, is seated on such a saddle as he was in the habit of using, and is accommodated with stirrups, a luxury which we shall feel the want of presently when we glance for a moment at our more modern equestrians. That is surely a good likeness of Charles; it has that unimposing appearance which we associate with him, and which even the noblest costume that man ever wore could not wholly counterpoise. He has an unlucky look. In a word, it is the aspect of a man who as a king would get into just such a false position as we have seen him in in Mr. Forster's recent work—intruding where his inferiors were his masters, where his subjects were at home and on their own ground, and he, their king, nothing better than a rash and unwelcome intruder. This is the portrait of such a man, one who would have failed even in smaller transactions than those in which his fate involved him, but would have borne his failure sweetly and even heroically to the last. It is not an impressive presence: the lion supporting the arms on the pedestal is grinning at the spectator as if he thought royalty a joke, and the horse on which the king is riding takes the liberty of cocking his head on one side as he trots along in the most unconcerned manner. This is a grave error. The sculptor who would impress you with the rider should make the horse sensible of the importance of his

burden and gravely attentive to his business. This horse of Charles' is a humorous animal, who doesn't care twopence for his master or anybody else, and has a disparaging twist about the corners of his mouth which would do very well for an equestrian statue of Rabelais or Cervantes, but not for the charger of a king. There is a lineal descendant of this animal in Cavendish Square, and a near relative in the enclosure of St. James's. The race in the present day has still some representatives, and it was only yesterday that your Servant saw two highly comic leaders in a hearse which were exactly of this statuesque type, and which were in such unseemly spirits and so uninfluenced by any sense of propriety, that they had to be frequently lashed about the head to keep them in any bounds at all. There are no horses with such an enjoyment of life as those that our undertakers make use of, nor any with so indecent a mirthfulness characterizing their demeanour.

To such a personage as should judge only by the external indications of our capital, it would infallibly appear that after the time of Charles the First some strange freaks had been indulged in in the way of costume. Indeed, in taking leave of the statue of the royal martyr, we bid good-bye for a while to realities in dress, and the next kind of costume that found favour was either partially or completely of a Roman order. There is a very good specimen of this Roman rage in the statue of James the Second at the back of Whitehall. There is something inconceivably dismal about that figure and the place in which it stands. Turned away from the great building and apparently pointing at a special place on the pavement, it strikes one at first that it must have been so arranged with some peculiar object, and that some deed of horror must have taken place on the spot which the finger indicates. There was indeed a rumour once in circulation that the finger was pointing at the spot on which Charles the First was beheaded. An interesting theory this, and one which would have completely elucidated the difficulty of the finger but for one or two obstinate circumstances which oppose,

as facts sometimes will, the most perfect and otherwise unanswerable of theories. Charles was executed on the other side of the building, and on a scaffold level with the first-floor windows. The real explanation of the difficulty is this: the statue of James once held in its hand that inevitable truncheon without which no well-conducted Roman could exist. The truncheon held with the forefinger along it, has slipped out of the hand, and hence the action which has misled the lovers of the marvellous into a belief that there was some hidden meaning in the statue. This is surely a valuable lesson to our modern sculptors—some of whom to this day affect the truncheon for many of their military characters—to make this convenient weapon if possible of the same piece as the hand which holds it, or if this may not be, to weld and secure it in its place with such cunningly-devised solderings and cements as shall defy the action of even such winters as that of 1859-60. The importance of this caution must not be overlooked, as there is no telling what effect might be produced by other such truncheon removals as this which has taken place at the back of Whitehall. Were the baton, for instance, which is at present held in the hand of the first gentleman in Europe as he sits on horseback in Trafalgar Square—were this instrument to slip its moorings, this august monarch would look as if he was just going to slap his thigh and cry out, 'Why, bless my life and heart, I've come out without my hat?'

There is a comparatively modern, but very dreadful and dirty Roman, who resides among the bushes in the centre of the St. James's Square enclosure. Is it or is it not the case that this Roman, like him of Whitehall, is pointing with his forefinger at the ground? The natural answer to this inquiry would be that the writer who asks this question had better go and look. He would do so willingly, but he is afraid. There is an inconceivable horror about that figure which surely must strike all who behold it. Whether it is because this Roman *being* a Roman is secreted among the *privet* in the middle of that enclosure, whether it is because

he is such an inconceivably and appallingly black Roman, or from whatever cause the feeling may arise, certain it is that that figure and its horse are supernaturally horrible objects. Surely no child ever ventures near that statue. Surely even the St. James's cats give it a wide berth. The little dapper clean Roman in Golden Square—he is pointing too—is quite another affair, and has nothing alarming about him except considering his situation, his supernatural cleanliness.

While considering the recluses of our squares it would be wrong to forget the dismallest statue in the dismallest enclosure, in the dismallest square, in the dismallest neighbourhood of our dismal capital. This is a figure of Queen Anne, in Queen Square, Bloomsbury. She is represented (with that stiffness of action about the neck which such feats necessitate) balancing a small crown which does not enclose any part of her head but lies lightly on the top of it. She is at the same time pointing to a cushion and sceptre which lie beside her on the top of a small but bulbous column, and is saying to her audience, 'I'll put that up there too, presently.'

The recluse of Soho Square is so mutilated, so strangely clad in a mixture of armour and periwig, and is withal so hemmed in and surrounded with props and woodworks, that it is not very easy to make out anything about him; while the slaughterous Duke of Cumberland, who is imprisoned in the Cavendish enclosure, would not, to judge by the pace at which he is going, be a recluse at all if he could help it. The Duke of Bedford and Charles James Fox, in their respective Squares of Russell and Bloomsbury, have got so near the railings that they can hardly be called recluses at all, and are almost as well off and as completely public characters as Mr. Pitt and my Lord Bentinck, who have got outside the railings altogether and are free of the town and its pleasures.

But what does our uneducated friend, who judges of the history of British costume by our monumental records—what does he make of the changes in our habits all this time? Immediately after the reign of Charles the First he finds

that a Roman conquest takes place, and that very soon the ordinary walking costume of a gentleman consists of a toga, or hair-cutting wrapper, a short skirt composed apparently of strips of stamped leather with a crown piece at the bottom of each length, of sandals with leggings, which could never by any possibility—short of a piece of 'elastic' which was not then invented—be kept up, and of a crown of laurels and a loose pigtail tied at the back with ribbon. He would observe, further, that the English gentleman of this period never stirred out without that truncheon of which mention has already been made. Charles the Second, at Chelsea Hospital, has such a weapon, and is indeed in all respects a model Roman. This statue, as well as that at the back of Whitehall, was put up by a gentleman of the remarkable name of Tobias Rustat, who having some small place about the court, thought he could not do better than spend some of its proceeds in bronze Romans.

Almost coeval with the noble Romans, the student of British costume finds, in front of St. Paul's, a figure of a lady in a dress of another description. The short and gentle sway of Anne is commemorated not only by the dismal figure already spoken of in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, and by another in another Queen Square, Westminster, but by a statue of the queen in her 'habit as she lived' standing in the enclosed space before St. Paul's Cathedral. There is a great beauty and piquancy in the way in which this figure stands—the little weak woman—backed by the huge structure of 'Paul's' and by its thundering dome. The attitude of Anne is quiet and feminine, and the contrast between her small statue and the almost ostentatious grandeur of the magnificent cathedral is greatly to the advantage of both.

With this figure of Anne and that mentioned before of Charles the First the list of those London statues that one cares twopence about comes to an abrupt end; that of George the Third, in Cockspur Street, though superior to some of more recent date, being hardly of much interest to any of us. It is by-the-by questionable whether an out-

door equestrian should be represented with his hat in his hand; the sensation—and the writer has experienced it—of seeing such a figure rained upon violently being a dreadfully uncomfortable one, and quite different from what one experiences in seeing a torrent fall upon those statues which have left their head-coverings hanging on the hat-pegs at home.

And now comes a time when in losing sight of George the Third's pigtail, and of the coat-skirts of good Captain Coram as he stands before the Foundling Hospital, we part company again with realities in dress, and plunge back again into the classic regions—not this time of Rome, but—of Greece. If a Roman conquest took place in the reign of Charles the Second it is equally certain that a Grecian descent was made upon this capital in that of the fourth George, and that a horde of fierce philosophers, armed with blankets and scrolls, took undisputed possession, at that period, of our unhappy country. It is a triumph to these gentry to have conquered us with such weapons, of which the blanket appears to be the more formidable; the scroll itself being, to say the truth, a flabby and innocuous instrument to look at. What the truncheon was to the Roman, however, that tremendous scroll was to the Grecian of the days of the Regency. Catch a public character at that time without it! 'I hold in my hand' is still a legend of the House of Commons, which probably originated in the scroll period. The illustrious men of that time were nearly all provided with a blanket, but there is no exception whatever to the scroll or the uncomfortable things which they do with it. Mr. Pitt, in Hanover Square, is using his as a prop. Canning's disgust is shown by an endeavour to crumple up and put out of sight this tiresome accompaniment of his official position. Perhaps the only member of this Grecian assembly who is thoroughly resigned to his scroll, and who has made up his mind to accept it and all that it involves with a good grace, is Mr. Fox, who is sleepily and sullenly indifferent on this as on all other points.

The wardrobe of a noble Grecian seems to be perfectly simple and inexpensive, the two ingredients already mentioned being the principal articles required. With these, and a pair of rather mysterious tights, and with nothing else at all —no, not so much as a crown of laurels—the reader may, if he likes, set up in business as a Grecian to-morrow. The only difficulty is with regard to the tights, which are so vague about the region where they join the shoe that one is sometimes even tempted to believe that the wearer of these sinister garments has no shoe, but is dressed—were such a thing possible—in stockings with a sole (double) fastened on to them. These tights are quite unfathomable: there is a mysterious institution known to shoemakers, called a 'welt,' which might throw some light on the subject if one knew what it was, but as this also is lost in obscurity we are indeed hopeless.

The Grecians bring us down to comparatively modern times; to the Achilles in Hyde Park, in yet more simple costume than the above-named philosophers—his outfit consisting of a long jack-towel and a shield—to the Duke of Wellington as he appears on Constitution Hill and before the Royal Exchange; to the Duke of York, Nelson, and the other glories of Trafalgar Square; to wit, 'The First Gentleman,' Sir Charles Napier, Jenner, and the Northumberland House lion.

What a thing it would be if we could make a clean sweep of these, all except the last! What a thing if we could get up one morning and find Trafalgar Square a tabula rasa! What inconsistent people we are! we rave and roar about an indicator lamp in Piccadilly, and while straining at this poor gnat we swallow a camel—would that it *were* a camel—in the shape of the Wellington statue. Is there no getting rid of that statue? Can no 'indignation meeting' be got up about it? Is there no ingenious chemist who can invent some subtle and devouring acid with which we might play upon that monster through a fire-engine, and which would slowly undermine its hated constitution? Surely this might be *done*, and what joy it would be to see such a force beginning

to tell! to behold the first hints of dissolution, the first falling away in that noble nose, the first symptom of corrosion in the cocked hat! Can no one start a panic in connexion with this figure, and persuade us that it is dangerous during high winds to leave it exposed at so great an altitude?

The writer of this paper is a poor man, but he will cheerfully put down his subscription towards any scheme that shall have for its object the destruction of this monster, and the annihilation, also, of Sir Charles Napier and Dr. Jenner.

Your Eye-witness is surely justified in complaining of the steady deterioration which has gone on in our out-door statues. In the annals of anything—and it is impossible surely to put the inquiry on a wider or fairer basis than this—in the annals of anything, is there an instance of such abject and desperate badness as is manifested in our recent experiments in sculpture? Let the reader judge for himself; let him take the demon of Constitution Hill to start with, and after examining him from various points of view, by no means omitting that which is to be obtained in the centre of the Park, after thoroughly mastering this terrific phenomenon, and reaching a condition in which he doubts the evidence of his senses as to the existence of anything so preposterous—let him proceed to Cavendish Square and take an observation of the memorial raised to my Lord George Bentinck. Consider that monument well. Can feebleness go beyond that? Can a cloak—which is in itself a bleak and desolate garment—can a cloak be held more feebly than by that eminent statesman's left hand? Can human legs be conceived by the richest imagination more hopeless than those? They are clad in strapped and damp unmentionables, and have obviously suggested that well-known, but aggravating cartoon, with which we are all but too familiar—the Sydenham trousers. If that statue has not the Sydenham trousers to answer for, what has?

Perhaps the beautiful portrait of the late Sir Robert Peel has. This statue at the west end of Cheapside, another of our comparatively recent efforts, seems also to have had a

share in the Sydenham trousers. The responsibility of calling that design into existence seems to rest about equally upon—not the shoulders, but—the legs of these two politicians. 'One good turn deserves another.' Since these statues have so evidently originated the Sydenham trousers, why should not the Sydenham trousers in turn originate some new statues? The sheet of able designs in which those garments are shown engaging in every occupation and pastime known (and unknown) to mankind, has in it to the seeing eye a giant fund of suggestion. In both the figures just referred to—of my Lord Bentinck and Sir Robert Peel, we find to our joy, the reappearance of the scroll—with paper three-quarters of an inch thick, and with a tight curl in it awkward to write on it would seem, and aggravatingly ready to roll up again of its own accord when referred to in debates.

Having now got within that extraordinary and elastic phenomenon called 'a stone's throw' of the Royal Exchange and King William Street, it may be well to visit the two statues which adorn those sites, and see what we think of them. Beyond a wild yearning for stirrups in the case of the equestrian, and a savage joy at the reappearance of new phases of the blanket, with its spiral fold, and the truncheon in the case of the pedestrian figure, we shall not think anything at all of these two works of art. We shall fly before them, and, taking a river-steamer, return to Charing-Cross, congratulating ourselves that there are no statues on the river—would to heaven there were several *in* it—and that there is nothing to interfere with the impression left by the statue of William the Fourth, which impression we should wish to carry with us to the base of the monument raised to his august brother in Trafalgar Square. But what has this worthy gentleman got on? A curtain with cords and tassels complete hangs upon his shoulders; sculptor's tights with soles, as before described, are on his legs; on his head is a beautiful wig; and in his hand—not a truncheon again, oh, surely not a truncheon. Surely a pleasant, smiling gentle-

man who rides out of a morning without a saddle, or so much as a stirrup to bless himself with, will not take a truncheon out with him during his airing. Will he not? There are bounds to all things, even to royal meekness; 'I come out without my hat, without my trousers, I ride without a saddle or stirrups, but stir from home without my truncheon, I neither can nor will.' This is the speech of the Royal George, and your Eye-witness think he is right. It is not every one who knows the sensation of a truncheon in the grasp. In that year when a Chartist alarm arose in this town, there was a volunteering in the special-constable department equal in zeal to that now actuating our riflemen, and more creditable, because the uniform was less rich, consisting of a half-yard of white tape (that at a penny farthing) tied round the left arm immediately above the elbow. At that time A TRUNCHEON was handed with directions for its use to each special, and there is no person living who was so armed who will not corroborate the writer, when he says that such a cudgel is so pleasant and convenient to the grip, so adapted to easy and graceful manipulation, so ready to lend itself to the action of pointing and giving directions, that no special laid his weapon aside without regret, nor is there any gentleman in this town who, were he made a field officer (or an undertaker's man) to-morrow, would not consider his acquirement of a baton one of the happiest privileges attached to those distinguished functions.

This instrument being of so winning and irresistible an order, one is surprised to find a great general like Sir Charles Napier putting up with the civilian's scroll. There is something hardly fair about this. The two inevitable alternatives, the truncheon and the scroll (how many London statues are there without one or other of them?), should be divided and assigned carefully, and with justice, to those who can legitimately lay claim to each of these distinguishing badges. What right has Sir Charles Napier to take the wind out of the sails of his neighbour, the imbecile Jenner, by having a rival scroll in his hand? Jenner leaves his (Sir Charles'\

truncheon alone, why does not he (Sir Charles) leave Jenner's scroll alone? Sir Charles has a sword too, with which he might have made play. In every way the unhappy Jenner is vilely used, and is taken so little account of by the Trafalgar Square authorities as a statue, that a thumping lamp on the pedestal corresponding to that which the doctor occupies is considered a proper pendant to him. After all it serves the sculptor right, who remembering Jenner's function should have made a variety among equestrian statues, and introduced a cow into his work.

But how to get a look at Nelson? that is the question. One can see him, it is true, on the base in certain phases of his existence, in all of which he appears to be seventy years old and seven feet high. There is too much cordage about this monument; a rope has doubtless a captivating twist in it, which it must be pleasant to tackle in clay, but we should be moderate in the use of such pleasures. One can get a sight of Nelson then on the base, but how to inspect the figure, to honour which that base exists at all, is the difficulty. It is vain to ascend the steps of the National Gallery, for from thence one can only see the hero's back with a cable tail—peeping from between his coat-flaps. It is useless to descend Parliament Street. It is madness to go near, as you can then only see the capital of the pillar. It is frenzy to go far off, for then you can see nothing. There are only two places this statue can be seen from; the back of the lion on Northumberland house, and the top of the Duke of York's Column.

His Grace the Duke of Northumberland being *that* peer whom your Eye-witness does not know, the back of his Grace's lion was an inaccessible spot, and so the only thing to do was to adopt the other, or Duke of York alternative; and this was the more desirable because your Servant in seeking to estimate truly the nature of the statue at the top of that pillar, had arrived at certain conclusions respecting it, as seen from below, with which it was impossible to remain for a moment satisfied. Seen from below it had

appeared to your Eye-witness that this royal personage was dressed in a mantle, a breastplate, a pair of drawers, and a lightning-conductor. It was impossible for reason to assent to such a conclusion as this, and so the ascent of the column, by mounting which these doubts would be set at rest for ever, and perhaps a satisfactory view of the Nelson Statue obtained into the bargain, became a matter of necessity.

The ascent of that column, alone, during a gale of wind is not a pleasant or exhilarating pastime. The winding stair is very dark, and as you mount it is impossible not to think perpetually of that young man, a foreigner, who last threw himself from this pillar's top, and in consequence of whose suicide a cage has been placed round the gallery. What must that foreigner have felt as he mounted each of those steep steps, or did he feel nothing—nothing but a blunted dull despair! As you think of him, the echo of your own steps leads you to believe that some one else is ascending behind, or in front of you, and you half hope that this is the case, unless it should happen to be a maniac, which contingency suddenly occurs to you and does not raise your spirits. Suppose a robber of the garotte tribe should follow you up and cut off your escape from below. Suppose the man who keeps the door should forget you and go away, locking you up there for the night. Certainly this tube is suggestive of much that is unpleasant. The darkness increases, too, as you get near the top, and when you have attained the highest step, you have, in pitch darkness, to open the door which goes upon the gallery, and which the wind, which up here blows a perpetual hurricane, flings viciously back in your face. He who ascends the Duke of York Column with a wish to examine closely the statue which forms its apex, will go away without having secured his object, the figure being invisible from the position occupied by the visitor to this monument. He, again, who mounts those one hundred and seventy steps, bent on attaining a level similar to that occupied by the figure of Nelson on *his* pillar, will also be doomed to disappointment, the extreme thickness of the

atmosphere rendering the hero and his column one indistinguishable mass, not very different in appearance from the chimney of a certain brewery on the other side of the Thames. But what of him who labours to this unpleasant altitude with hopes stimulated by the reputation for a thirty-mile view enjoyed by this fallacious monument? He takes with him his Mogg's map of the country round London, and to himself he saith, 'I shall see St. Alban's shrine, Gravesend shall I see and Dartford, also Sevenoaks, also Reigate.' Shall his purchase of Moggs be thus rewarded? Not so, abandoning his thirty-mile hopes he comes down to ten: Finchley (see Moggs) is but eight miles off; but he does not see Finchley. He wheels him about; Greenwich is (see Moggs) six miles off; but he sees not Greenwich, still less Woolwich, still less Droitwich. Again he lowers his standard, and tries Hampstead, Camberwell, Kennington—what will you? He sees none of them. Nay, does he see the Houses of Parliament, the Tower of London, the British Museum? Not one of them; but in revenge he can distinguish the Athenæum and United Service Clubs; the tops of the hats of the members ascending the steps of the same; and the bayonet of the sentry on the guard below; all the rest is smoke. 'An unfavourable day, sir, for the view,' says he who keeps the column and takes the unfrequent sixpences; but it is a remarkable fact that he does not make this observation as you are going up. It is a rare occurrence such an ascent. The rumour spreads while the voyager is in the interior of the pillar, that a traveller is engaged in this feat, and the inhabitants assemble at the base in large numbers to see him emerge. The climbing of Mont Blanc is no longer a wonder, and the York Column voyager is a subject of greater interest than he who has attempted the other comparatively common-place achievement.

For the rest, this gallery being a good place for reflection, your Eye-witness took advantage of it to pass in review before himself all that he had seen during his statue-studies, and when briefly recorded, the memory rose up to him of

certain other works in bronze and marble, with the like of which—if we had chosen—this town might have been made beautiful. He thought of a figure at Turin, so great, not only as an embodiment of masculine beauty, but also in its rendering of as perfect and complete a thought as ever entered the mind of man. He thought of that soldier dropping the heavy sword into its sheath, when its work was over, with that calm strong face that set the allurements and the dangers of ease as completely at defiance as the perils and hardships of the war that preceded it. He thought of this figure, so perfect an epitome of manhood, the like of which has not been produced since the hand of Michael Angelo became as cold as the marble on which it wrought; and afterwards he thought of the horse on which the soldier rides—such a horse as no sculptor has moulded for twice a thousand years—as noble an idealisation in its way as its rider.

The author of this little satire, while thinking of these things, remembered that there stood once, not many yards from the place where the memory of *our* great warrior is made the subject of a ghastly caricature, a glorious figure of Victory, designed (by that same foreign hand which raised the Turin statue) to do the English soldier honour. Yes, but a few months since, and at the back of the house which belonged to him whom the piece of pleasantry on Constitution Hill commemorates,—at the back of that house (the windows of which was once broken by an English mob) there rested for awhile among us an angel which we were at little pains to entertain—the angel of Victory. Has the memory of a work of genius outlived its removal from before us for a dozen months? Does any one still remember that statue? Does any one remember how reverently the teaching of nature had been considered in the action of those arched and poising wings, resting, but still on the alert? Does any one remember the grand and startling form of the whole composition, reminding one, at first and at a distance, of some mighty hovering bird? Is the exceeding beauty of

that head forgotten; the patient loving watch, kept as long as earth should endure, at the door of the hero's tomb; the jealous guardianship of his sword? Are these things forgotten? Is the figure of the Princess Elizabeth—Charles the First's Elizabeth—forgotten? Is the Clive that stood awhile before the Treasury, remembered no more? Are the many heads of women, which had they come down to us with a history and a pedigree, would be talked of with hushed breath as marvels of classic beauty, are these swept from our memories? If so, there may be mentioned one more recent appeal against national prejudice to which it is possible to point. Put on one side, and deprived of the honourable place which it should have commanded, there was exhibited in the sculpture room of the Royal Academy, in the year 1860, a work, the equal of which, unless executed by the same hand, has never been seen within the walls of that room since those walls were built. It is not this time a soldier in colossal bronze—horse and man quivering with life and strength. It is not an angel hovering over us with outstretched wings. It is not the lifeless form of the doomed daughter of a doomed king. It is the figure of a child: there is nothing more to be said of it. This work is such an embodiment of childhood, such a realisation of all we look for and delight in in a child, that to call it by this name is to say all that can be said about it. It is a faultless, perfect work. What REYNOLDS saw in a child, MAROCHETTI, the sculptor who wrought this figure, has in a different way seen too, seen as completely, rendered as perfectly. There needs no knowledge of art, no depth of connoisseurship to understand such a work as this. Any one with eyes can see it and appreciate it. Any father, or still more any mother, that looks on it unbiassed will own it for a TRUTH.

XIX.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE SPRIGHTLY GENIUS AND THE DARING ORIGINALITY EXHIBITED IN OUR LONDON BUILDINGS.

THE subject which we are now considering is one in every way on a much larger scale than that (of the London statues) which we last took in hand. Not only does every one of the houses, in every one of our streets, contribute an item to the architecture of London; but besides this, which renders the topic a vast and almost unapproachable one, there is this fact also to be remembered, that while the oldest of our London statues—properly so called—dates no further back than the time of Charles the First, there are buildings in London whose pedigrees are older than that of the rake's father-in-law, in Hogarth's Marriage à la Mode.

Whether that gradual decline, which was traced in our metropolitan statues, has its prototype in the chronological history of the London buildings, is a question which, because of the difference of *style* in such structures as Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's, and the special beauties of each, it is difficult to decide; but this at least may be affirmed, and affirmed with confidence, that after the period of the building last named, the descent was rapid and continuous; and that at the time when the statues began to be at their worst, our buildings were at their vilest too.

But there is certainly one respect in which we are better off in an architectural than a sculpturesque point of view; and that is, that whereas it was distinctly proved that our very last productions in the way of statues were the worst of all, and that the steps which might be taken to improve our city in this respect were neglected; it is certain that, architecturally, our unhappy metropolis has got over the worst, and that some unmistakeably favourable symptoms are beginning to appear in our patient. For though we have recently been guilty of a bridge—at Battersea—which is calculated to fill us with despair; that is yet but a degradation of an already

rather hopeless neighbourhood. We may feel pretty secure that no one of our great public sites will ever again be burdened with such a range of building as that which occupies the northern side of Trafalgar Square, or by such gimcrack tenements as border that fashionable thoroughfare which goes by the cheap and unpromising name of Regent Street.

Pursuing the plan adopted in our late examination of the beautiful statues with which our capital is decorated, and tracing our leading public buildings down from age to age, with an eye to the detection of any signs of decline or symptoms of improvement that may appear in them, we shall be able to see exactly where we are, and also perhaps to hit upon some additional corroboration of that theory of the bad taste which belongs to a certain period of our civilization, which has just been put forward.

If ever that day should arrive when he who ascends the Monument on Fish Street Hill is able to see anything besides smoke—if ever that day should come, one of the first things that would catch the attention of this threepenny sight-seer would be the 'four gray walls and four gray towers' of the Fortress of London. Low-lying, compact, snug, at once suggestive of its purpose and agreeable to the eye, there is in the Tower of London nothing to complain of. From the river, from London Bridge, from every point of view that Tower is always a pleasant feature of the town which it is supposed to protect. If we built a fortress to guard our city now, we should do it doubtless on different principles, and pile it high in the air. When that Tower was first made, what was there to be gained by height? They had no cannon then with which to rake the river; and lying low as we see it, the occupants of the place were out of the way of the arrows which, it must be remembered, were but straight-flying projectiles, and could not, like the modern shell, drop from the sky into the middle of a garrison. With every year the contingencies to meet, and the difficulties to be considered, increase in war as in all other things; and to gain our object, whatever it may be, gets so much more dif-

ficult with every day's passage, that new diseases of the nerves and mind are developed, and the brains of one set of men will soften into a useless pulp in trying to keep pace with those of another set, which are a trifle tougher. When that Tower was built, there were but few and simple objects to be borne in mind in its construction, nor did invention move at such a rate as it does now, when, while the preparations are making to meet the new discovery, another takes place which renders those preparations but useless lumber on the earth. There is a kind of lazy luxury now about the act of looking at such a structure as the Tower, and thinking how little one would have had to do to cut a figure in the days when it was built. For the rest, it is a castle that defies our criticism; for in its day it fulfilled its purpose, and had neither pretension nor impotence—or both, as sometimes happens—to make it amenable to ridicule. There is no fortress of any sort, material or otherwise, but is wholly impregnable if it do but fulfil the duties of its station, and pretends to nothing that it cannot perform.

But if this little more than negative achievement is great—if it is much to perform what is promised, even when the promise is a small one—what is it to offer a great pledge, and to redeem it; to aim at mighty altitudes and to reach them; to give a word of promise of incalculable value, and keep it, to the last iota of the contract? And all this is done, as far as the first builders were concerned, in the cathedral church at Westminster; the first 'builders' it is repeated, for he who added on the chapel of Henry the Seventh did no injury to the building to which he made that addition, though the new chapel was of a widely different style. He presented his new offering at the old shrine, but gave it in his own language, and in no attempt to mimic that, *which nevertheless he admired*, of the older period. Such are the additions—or else none at all—that can be made to an old edifice without offence. If the style of your period—and every period should have a style—will not suit the old building, then you must leave it alone. Would that Sir Christopher

Wren had done this, and then the towers at the west end of our Abbey would never have been raised to disfigure it. Wren had a manner of his own, and a fine one, but it would have been ridiculous to use it in connexion with the Westminster church; and feeling this, he tried to go back and revive what belonged to another age, and to resuscitate a corpse. He should have let the Abbey alone, as Sir Hans Sloane did the smaller edifice spoken of by Pope. Let us have no restorations. Mend, if you will; repair as much as you like; but never attempt to return to the past. No more classics, no more mediævalisms, no more Gothic architecture, no more illuminations. These things have all been done—done gloriously and perfectly—done once for all. It is wise to do that which you can do better than it has ever been done before. It is not wise in a great and advanced era to do that imperfectly which, at a period which we have gloriously surpassed, was done better than, with all our mechanical aids, it can be done now, because it was then the natural expression of the feeling of the time. This is an age of glass and iron; why is there no church constructed of such materials? The writer would like to see a cathedral so built more than any other that could be conceived: we should have no stone roof then, to shut the sky out, as our creed requires no shelter from the light of truth. The beauty of such a building might be excessive, and the services held there need form no period of hard, hard labour, in the day of rest.

But, it may be urged, you would hear ill in this same glass cathedral, and indeed you would. What do you want to hear. The hearing was wanted at the time when there was no printing-presses, and no books. The voices of a thousand singers would be heard, and of ten times that number of men at prayer. To worship, to pray, to sing hymns of praise is what we want churches for in this age, and not to listen to a single voice. The time has moved in all things else, oh why has it stood so strangely still in this?

There needs no *re*-vision, which we are so afraid of, but

simply a *di*-vision of our church services, to furnish the liturgy for such a cathedral as this in question, nor for those who like it, need the sermon or lecture be an impossible thing. Some smaller part of the building, some side chapel, might be set apart for such a purpose; and your Eye-witness thinks he knows of one individual whose shadow would rarely fall on the pavement of that portion of the building.

Were such an edifice as this—A CRYSTAL CATHEDRAL—to be raised on Primrose Hill, with short and attractive services carried on there throughout the Sunday, many men would go to church who never do so now, because after a week of labour and effort, a compulsory two hours in a pew is a restraint to which they are slow to yield themselves. It is for such persons that the writer is pleading, and it is a large class. For those who are satisfied with what exists—for that dear old lady who seats herself in Marylebone church, and repeats the whole of the service (absolution and all) in a soft whisper to herself—for her, and such as her, there is an ample provision, and if there was the slightest danger of offence to such persons, the writer would have cut his hand off, rather than have written these lines. There is ample church provision for those who are satisfied with things as they are, but there is another class, whose requirements have surely been too little studied, and in whose interests these words are written.

The period next arrived at in our London buildings is, perhaps, rather an ostentatious one. Not ostentatious about nothing, but still making the most of itself. The edifices of this time are not only fine, but they tell you that they are so. This is so with men sometimes. It is a mistake to suppose that vain-glorious men have nothing in them, and that real merit is always modest. It is so sometimes, Heaven be praised, but not always; and the writer of these words is acquainted with many mighty pretty fellows, who are no strangers to their own abilities, and with some men of the highest powers, who never lose an opportunity of proclaim-

ing to all whom it may concern the richness of their endowments. In Whitehall, where may be seen the dawning of this grandiose and pompous style; in St. Paul's Cathedral, where its full development is attained; and for a minor example in Somerset House—in all these, a certain element of ostentation may be detected, which, because there is something real and sterling behind it, is neither despicable nor offensive. St. James Palace does not belong to that period in appearance, and all its suggestions are of an earlier time; but no one who looks at Whitehall can associate that noble building with any race but the Stuarts, and with the period when every trace of mediævalism was gone for ever: a time which it is difficult, by-the-by, to mark more accurately and more characteristically than by the substitution of the title 'mister,' for the older and more gracious 'master.' This is an infinitely subtle, though trifling sign of those times, and has in it the dawning of this age in which we live, and of its habits and customs. 'Where is Mr. Pym?' was the plaintive inquiry of Charles the First, when in search of his 'birds that were flown' from the House of Commons; and were his wretched work to do again in this day, he might still inquire for Mr. Bright or Mr. Disraeli by the same title.

From that unhappy second king of the Stuart race, the writer of this and of the treatise which preceded it, finds it a difficult thing to get away. The real figure of Charles the First at Charing Cross held us longest, while we were considering the statues, and now an imaginary figure of that sinned against *and* sinning sovereign, appears at the Whitehall window, which has now, which always has had, and always will have, such a painful and irresistible fascination for us all. Yes, it is well to talk of Whitehall as associated with the Stuarts; it is in connexion with but one of that race, that we are always thinking of it. Who is there that stands before that beautiful banqueting-hall many minutes without thinking of Charles, and his appearance at that fatal window? What face is there stamped and photographed on the English mind so indelibly as that of Charles the First? His story is

told by his face, and almost by one part of it. There is no feature in the human countenance that tells so much as the eyebrow. The expression of the eye depends on it almost entirely. There is heroism, but not enduring heroism; there is inconsistent scrupulosity, and religion—especially in its more unpractical developments; there is pride, ambition, and a certain peevishness playing at strength, expressed in that brow. There is in it a tendency to many things at once, there is occasional tyranny, and a perpetual weakness that allowed nothing to predominate for long together—there are all these things expressed—but nothing of utter baseness, or of sullenness. Good God! when he appeared at that window, with that white face, and the refining influence of long martyrdom, and of the near approach of death upon it, how could they remember his faults, or bear the sight? Shame on them! They did right to take his kingdom from him, but wrong to slay him at that Whitehall window. He forfeited his trust, he heaped error on error, he was dangerous and ruinous in his place, but yet your Servant would have fought as hard, had he lived then, to save the king's life, as he would to have pushed him from the throne.

Your Eye-witness commits no one but himself to such feelings as have just been expressed, and which the palace of Whitehall called to his mind; for though there are in this building—a perfect faultless model of its kind—a thousand beauties to admire, that figure of the king is still at the window, and will catch the eye of your Servant, try as he may to forget it and to occupy himself with the beauty of the place. There is enough in that too, one would say, to engross any one, and to absorb all the spectator's attention. The proportions of that building would be hurt by six inches more or less in any part, so exquisite is their symmetry, and so just their balance. It is of the exact size that an unbroken building should be; had it been larger it would have been monotonous—smaller, it had been unimposing. Let no one suppose that such a structure is easy to raise, because it is so simple. The easy-looking and the simple things in all art

matters are more difficult than many a complex and intricate arrangement. It is a rule that easy reading is hard writing, and to construct *anything* that the mind takes in without effort and without being puzzled by it is a triumph of art. It might be deemed no arduous task to raise such a palace as Whitehall, with its four plain walls with windows in it. If it were easy to build so, why is it not done? The Reform Club in Pall Mall has four plain walls with windows in it, as Whitehall has, but he who goes from one to the other will find a difference, which is not in favour of the Club-house. There is one strange deficiency in Whitehall which must strike every one who looks at it, and that is the absence of any apparent means of getting into it. At first sight it appears to be all windows and no doors, and you really become quite puzzled at last as to this omission, and examining the building behind and before in vain, discover at last in a great ugly block of masonry built on at the side, a couple of little doors such as are seen in the vestry of a church, and which give admission to the interior of the hall. These means of entrance are both paltry and unworthy, and if the men who sit on horseback in the alcoves of the horseguards opposite are ever critically disposed, here is the weak point for them to fasten upon. The fact is, that Whitehall is a fragment, and was simply a banqueting-hall built on to the original palace in the time of James the First. But were this not so, were there really this defect of an absence of a proper means of admission to the building, your Eye-witness when standing before it is in no humour for fault-finding, and scarcely for admiration either. For him the figure of the king stands ever at the window, the substantial facts of the Whitehall masonry become dim and misty behind the unreal fiction of that sad vision, and 'nothing is but what is not.'

And what if it is to the order of Ostentation that St. Paul's belongs? If it is ostentatious, has it not cause to be so? Could that vacant place have been better filled, could that Hill of Ludgate have been better crowned, than by the work of Wren which is there? In the Gothic rage which has

fevered us of late the beauty of this cathedral has been too much lost sight of; for it must be remembered, that independently of its being such a genuine expression of the age to which it belongs, and of his mind who built it, this church is in its character of a work of art, a high and magnificent achievement. It is fine from all points of view. If you get a mere glimpse of it between the houses of some narrow neighbouring lane, it is a fine and suggestive glimpse. If you see it from a distance, so huge and telling a structure is it that the vast extent of London is still gathered and held together by it as completely as a village by its rustic church. London with all its increase does not outgrow *that*, nor ever will. There is no other thing that could have had this effect but a cupola. There is nothing else, no spire, no tower, however great, that could so hold our town together. The dome seems to have been invented with a prophetic eye to great towns and their exigencies, and for ours even more than others. There are no nooks and crannies in that vast smooth surface to become choked and disfigured with dirt and soot. It is not a jot the worse for all the incense which all the chimneys since the time of Wren have offered at its shrine, and are still flinging up every day from their foul and grimy censers. Indeed the style of the whole building is in its large and even masses, and the great blocks of masonry by which it makes its effects, singularly calculated to set our London smoke at defiance.

Nor is there in this *noble* church anything—as has been alleged by some—that savours of the Pagan temple rather than the Christian cathedral. The great vital reality that religion is in this country is by no means inaptly represented by this simple and undisguiseful pile. This church is Christian, but it is not Catholic in its look. There are about it no furtive and secretive corners, no contrivances and intricacies that fear the light. It shows candid and open in the daylight like the creed it represents, and gives to our sight everything which it has, because it has nothing to conceal.

But with this feeling of admiration which we surely all

experience for St. Paul's Cathedral, is there any one who wishes that such a church should be reproduced? Surely not. When caught by the notion of the cupola, we have in more recent days introduced it for the sake of introducing it, we have not prospered over well, as those will think who will give themselves the trouble to spend a half-dozen of minutes in front of the National Gallery or the London University.

But are we not travelling a little fast in descending suddenly from St. Paul's Cathedral to these modern structures? Curiously enough there is little to detain us in the chronological history of the London buildings between these two periods. Beyond such edifices as the Foundling Hospital —which is not beautiful—a few churches, and some rebuildings and additions made here and there, there is not much to hold us on our way to more modern times, and the architectural glories of our own—in this respect—most favoured age.

There are, however, one or two things in connexion with this intermediate period which it is necessary to mention.

The classic rage, which, it will be remembered, struck us in examining the statues belonging to a certain place of metropolitan decoration, is not unrepresented in the buildings of the time, and is in few things more conspicuous than in the prevailing fondness for urns which seems to have existed in men's minds. In the decoration of Somerset House, which is a good specimen of the somewhat pompous style before alluded to, these urns are, in combination with trumpeting angels and other vile statuary, the chief resources in a decorative way at the architect's command. These urns are indeed to the buildings what the truncheon was to the statues of that age, and are in every way as satisfactory and as interesting. Just heaven! what an invigorating thing it would be to be able to plough down into the depths of a man's mind profoundly enough to ascertain the *exact* object which he has in view, when he surmounts the edifice in course of construction with a row of urns! At Somerset House, on the 'New' church in the Strand, and (in more modern instances) on the parapets of the Treasury and of Buckingham Palace, the frequent urn

is present to suggest the cup which cheers but not inebriates. What *is* the fiction of those urns? And what are they supposed to hold? Their very figure accuses a hollow inside; how is that hollow filled? Is any elucidation of this difficulty provided by the fact that the appearance of this beautiful and intelligent ornament is nearly coeval with the first introduction of tea into this country? It may be so? It may be that the national mind, elated with the joy of this new discovery, would hear of nothing but tea and its emblems, and that even the architects of the day were obliged to yield to the popular feeling on the subject. But why are these vessels incomplete and destitute, to an urn, of spout? The suppression of this indispensable part of the urn is to be deplored, not only because in itself it is ruinous to the urn, *as* an urn, to be without a spout, but because it has led to the introduction of much foreign matter in connexion with these vases which is inconsistent and anomalous to their nature. Let any person doubting this proceed to the Treasury buildings in Parliament Street, and if he has good eyes he will see that the long and desperate license allowed to our architects in this permission to suppress the spouts of their tea-urns has borne terrible fruit in these modern times; the liberty to tamper with his subject having induced the designer of the Treasury urns to represent each of them emitting from its cover—not a cloud of steam as might have been expected—but a FIR-CONE which having had the luck to grow out of a tea-urn proves itself worthy of its wonderful origin, and in its turn gives birth out of its very entrails to a small and pointed obelisk.

Tea-urns, trumpeting angels, and all things else considered, it must be owned that Somerset House (especially as seen from the river) is a fine and imposing edifice, and a good representative of the order of architecture which we have ventured to call the Ostentatious.

When things come to the worst they are commonly near to mending; and most certainly at the beginning of this

present century all matters of taste were at their very very worst. The comparatively modern structures of about that time are almost inconceivably vile, and quite inconceivably sad and dispiriting. The London University, spoken of above, is not calculated to exhilarate the pupils who attend that seat of learning, or to reconcile the patients in the hospital opposite to that life to which they have been recalled. Nay, it exercises a baneful influence over the street in which it stands, and it is not till it gets near Bedford Square that Gower Street is able to recover itself, and to pluck up heart at all. Nor is the neighbouring Museum, though of more recent date, and narrowly missing what is grand and fine, a structure that makes the animal spirits to leap with joy. The great magnificence of the style aimed at by this building lies in certain things—very simple things—without which it is shorn of the glory which, where those things exist, it may boast of more perhaps than any other kind of architecture that has ever been invented. Being a style of architecture in which detail goes for nothing, and in which everything depends on the symmetry and beauty of the main outline, it follows that any defect in these is finally and utterly destructive. Such a temple as that which we have raised in Great Russell Street to the memory of the ancients, demanded as a sine quâ non certain conditions, which if the thing is to be fine must be fulfilled. The first and most important of these is height, and the next is space around, and especially in front of it. Were the British Museum placed on rising ground with a great square in front of it; were the centre of it raised on a flight of steps, so that the basis of the columns were where the capitals are at present; were there then a little more length of building on each side of the portico before the turn of the wings; we should see much to admire in this edifice, and should be struck and impressed by its grandeur. As it is, seen necessarily from a near point of view, the projecting wings being much nearer the eye than the central portion of the building, that part of it which should rise majestically above the mere tributary

portions at the side, is by those inferior members itself dwarfed and debased, as any one may see who stands with his back against the area railings which are opposite this ambitious edifice. The British Museum has however had a narrow escape of being a fine building, and must therefore—and because when the moon is shining above it, it is really impressive—be treated with very much greater respect than that other classical attempt which represents our commercial greatness in the city. The Royal Exchange is admirably calculated to shake the confidence which the world is pleased to bestow upon us, and looks like a structure raised by a city of Jeremy Diddlers as a Joint-Stock TEMPLE OF INSOLVENCY. It takes a walk to the Guildhall, and a few minutes spent before its capital old façade, with its store of windows and its pleasant waving line against the sky, to get one back into a right condition or respect for the resources of the City of London.

But worse than the Royal Exchange itself, worse than the London University, worse than even Buckingham Palace with its banners, its trophies, its spike-emitting urns, and its spear-brandishing Britannias—worst than the worst of everything in this world, is that building which represents the arts of this country, and in which our national collection of works by the old masters, and our annual show of pictures by the new, are exhibited to the admiring multitude. If, as we have seen in considering the characteristics of Somerset House—if the state of a man's mind, when he designs a row of urns as an ornament, is a curious and interesting subject of investigation—what shall be said of him who, as was the case with the architect of the National Gallery, decorates the front of his building with an interminable succession of blank stone windows? It is a very doubtful thing whether in the case where there occurs a space among several real windows which requires filling up—it is a grave question whether that dismal fiction, a blank window, is admissible even then, but to have a row of blank windows across the whole width of Trafalgar Square, to keep two small prac-

ticable ones in countenance, is indeed an unpardonable offence. But perhaps it will be said that these are wanted to break the wall, as ornaments? Oh! Mr. Architect, if you had constructed your edifice aright, depend upon it your walls would have been broken by the necessities of the building itself.

But to what purpose is it to enter into this minute criticism of an eyesore which, like the Wellington statue, is a standing grievance of our town—to what purpose is it, after all, to dwell upon the defects of this unhappy structure, which in one word may be said to have everything it ought not to have and nothing which it ought to have? It possesses, as we have seen, windows without glass, a cupola without size, a portico without height, pepper-boxes without pepper,—and the finest site in Europe without anything to show upon it!

We shall offend by such buildings no more. The germ of improvement is surely showing itself. Our glance at some of the principal buildings of London has shown us a decline from the days of Wren, but there is also now something to encourage us to look hopefully on with a conviction that we shall not offend (seriously) any more. The new Covent Garden Theatre—though a portico with windows underneath it is not pleasant to the eye—is a fine and stately building; and the new Houses of Parliament, though characterised by some aggravating deficiencies, are not of the kind of edifice which one feels inclined to laugh at.

It would be very painful were it necessary to criticise with severity the work of one whose loss is so recent as that of Sir Charles Barry. But happily this is not the case. Compared with anything that had gone before, for many, many years, the Houses of Parliament come out as almost great in their undoubted superiority. Speaking of them as of other London edifices, merely as they show outside, and not entering into the question of their internal arrangements and adaptability to the purpose for which they were intended—regarding them from a decorative point of view only, there is this to be said in their favour. It is a great achievement to have com-

pleted so huge an undertaking at all, and to have made such a mark as this upon the earth. It is a symmetrical and consistent whole, its lines and proportions are very agreeable, its details are well carried out, and it is altogether formed upon the best models of the period to which it professes to belong. In a word there is everything here but genius. Genius with its inconsistencies, genius with its failures, and genius with its absurdities if you will; but still with that one power of *interesting* you which it alone possesses. This is what line and plummet cannot do. There is no accuracy of copying however close, no reproduction of ancient marvels however laborious, that can hold us lost in that pleased surprise with which we regard for the first time those achievements which have been put forth by a new and creative mind. To feed upon the produce of other men, to revive the glories of a previous age, to build upon those models which the schools have established, may be the course which it is safest for those to adopt who feel no wealth of new invention in their hearts, and whom no audacious promptings from within urge on to glorious aspirations, to dangerous flights, and sometimes to disastrous falls. With such falls we sympathise; such flights carry us with them, and at the sight of such aspirations our own breath comes fast and thick. The pomposities of Wren, and the wild extravagancies of Vanbrugh, will not hinder the admiration of any mind but a narrow and prejudiced one, and it is not to criticise but to wonder that we pause before St. Paul's Cathedral or linger at the gates of Blenheim.

The first great defect of the buildings at Westminster is that in the chronological history of our town, as told by its architecture, they are wholly valueless. In the Tower of London, in Westminster Abbey (nay, in every alteration and addition to that church), in Whitehall, in St. Paul's Cathedral, we find plain and unmistakeable evidence of the period to which each of those structures belongs. But there is nothing to mark those Houses of Parliament as having been raised in the reign of Victoria. In addition to this fault

there is another of less but still of some importance. Granting that this edifice was to be founded on some old and established type, and waiving, for the moment, the objection that it should have marked and represented in some distinct way the age to which it belongs, there is yet this great defect in its construction—that it is too uniform in its surfaces, too minute in its ornamentation, and that the eye is stinted of those great massive shadows, and those varied effects of light in which it revels, and which there was surely nothing in the exigencies of the building to render impossible.

But if it was not the fortune of the builder of the new Parliament Houses to call into existence such a structure as shall reduce the passer-by into a temporary forgetfulness of the business which brought him to Westminster, it is at least certain that there is nothing here calculated to disgrace or to bring upon our town that ridicule which attaches to others of our public structures. There is nothing to laugh at in the Houses of Parliament, nor any place for such strong censure and such bitter condemnation as are imperatively called for by such a disastrous failure as the new bridge at Battersea. There is no attack too furious for this paltry toy, no battering ram of criticism that one should hesitate to push at it. To ride rough shod over this wretched thoroughfare, and to resent the infliction upon us of this permanent and unavoidable eyesore, is to yield to a just and righteous indignation such as this offence against taste most entirely merits. When a great engineering difficulty is overcome, but conquered in a clumsy and ungainly fashion, we may regret, it is true, that the victory was not to be achieved more gracefully, but we are still resigned and satisfied; but when what is in these days a small feat only has to be accomplished, we are less tolerant of its offences against the laws of beauty. We can, again, stand pretty patiently all forms of sturdy disfigurement, and those kinds of ungainliness which are characterised by strength; but for flimsy ugliness, and those external defects which belong to the gimcrack order, we neither have, nor should have, any patience. And this bridge

is essentially gimcrack. It is like a child's toy made of tin. It is based upon the model of those designs which adorn the lids of children's colour-boxes, and the cases in which three little blown bottles of choicest perfumes are sold for sixpence. So slight and trifling a structure does this bridge appear that, at a little distance, you almost fancy it could be taken up and put away in the drawer, with the tin German soldiers, the magic lantern, and the Noah's Ark. If the park to which this conduit leads should ever attain to be a place of popular resort, if the trees of Battersea Park should ever reach to more than three feet of height, then would the ugliness of the new bridge become of even greater importance than it is at present, and its popularity among the lower classes, probably, be even more universal that it is at present; for taste is a rare and small-spreading commodity, and one never met with in certain phases and degrees of civilization. It is a thing of extremes. The savage who has no civilization and the cultivated man who has most meet here on the same ground; but between the two extremes every form of bad and vulgar taste is to be met with.

Having got to this Bridge of Battersea, we will, with the reader's permission, suppose it to be the means of communication between public and private London, and will step across it into the regions of domestic architecture, that we may examine whether that branch of metropolitan decoration gives us ground for the entertainment of such hopes as we have managed to screw out of our more public architectural prospects.

XX.

HIS EVIDENCE UPON THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THE residence of your Eye-witness is at the end of a certain row of stuccoed houses in the parish of Marylebone, and in the postal district N.W. The house, however, it must be remembered, is not in a line with the other houses in Lumbago Terrace: it is situated at the eastern extremity of that

stronghold of miasma, and projects from the other clammy and exudaceous tenements in a manner which it is peremptorily necessary should be fully understood before any one can enter into the full meaning of what follows.

Lumbago Terrace is a fine specimen of the architecture of Corinth, as adapted to the necessities of our age and habits. It is well known that the great glare and blaze of sunlight to which in this country we are perpetually subject, and which dazzles and scorches the inhabitants of our island during the major portion of the year, is the only drawback of our climate, and the only feature of it which is liable to objection, or which it is necessary to guard against. The architect of Lumbago Terrace, deeply initiated in his subject (as is indeed the case with all his fraternity), and being a profound and original thinker, only considering what is sensible and convenient, and not trammelled by conventional rules (in which respect also he resembles the other members of his profession)—this gentleman, when he 'threw up'—if the expression may be pardoned—the great Corinthian façade in the centre of Lumbago Terrace, found that he had only succeeded (completely) in darkening the four centre houses of the row, and that the others, unless he could think of some mode of averting so terrible a calamity, stood a fair chance of having the light of heaven let into their drawing and dining rooms almost unimpeded. This discovery cost the ingenious Mr. Slack many sleepless nights, and his friends observed—though they did not know the cause—that a cloud was upon his sprightly soul.

But one day when Slack had entertained a numerous circle of acquaintances and friends at dinner, it happened that towards the conclusion of the meal—during which he had been unusually silent—the conversation turned upon a certain Grecian temple which one of the company—Sir Benjamin Bigg, a great authority on bells—had recently visited in his travels, and which he described as being composed of a central block completely shaded from the Grecian sun by a portico. 'Aha!' said Mr. Slack, 'this is like Lumbago

'Nor,' continued Sir Benjamin, 'is this all. This great block of masonry would have been monotonous had it continued in a straight line, and a portico—however large it may be—will only overshadow a certain portion of the building. Now mark the ingenuity of our great Grecian architect. What does he do? He takes back the line of his wings, buries them in a recess behind the great central mass before spoken of, and then he throws forward a couple of massive corner buildings at each end of the pile, themselves kept from the glare by that main pile itself, and immensely helping in their turn to overshadow the receding portions of the wings which I have already described.'

When Sir Benjamin leant back in his chair after giving this lucid description, which he had illustrated by a diagram drawn with his thumb-nail on the table-cloth, it was observed by the company that a great change came over the demeanour of their entertainer. Rising from his chair and smiling faintly, he asked permission to retire for a few minutes to his study, from which place he emerged one hour afterwards bearing in his hand the plan of Lumbago Terrace as it at present stands, a close imitation of the thumb-nail diagram of Sir Benjamin Bigg. It was exhibited to the company, and applauded to the echo by all present, except, indeed, one gentleman, who in the frenzied stupidity of his soul, or perhaps under the influence of too much wine, inquired whether a building might not be very admirably adapted to the hot climate and perpetual sunlight of Greece and yet not be perfectly suited to the peculiar exigencies of Marylebone. This lunatic was, however, promptly put to silence, and was generally snubbed and discountenanced by the rest of this enlightened assembly.

Your Eye-witness cannot help thinking that some such principle as that thus fancifully conceived must have been acted upon in the designing of the different terraces which surround the Regent's Park. The Grecian taste which succeeded the Roman in this country was at its height in the time of that dire regency, and consequently Grecian pediments,

Corinthian capitals, and statues after the antique models are to be found in the Park, which was made at that time, and are as impressive and valuable-looking as stucco ornaments commonly are. There is indeed one terrace nearly allied to that of Lumbago, in which the genius of the architect seems to have come out in the invention of a wholly new and original style, such as in the annals of building has never been known before, and concerning which there seems reason to entertain a frisky and joyous hope that it may never be known again. It was our hint to speak in the last report in terms of high admiration of the cupola or dome which roofs so nobly the cathedral of St. Paul. It was further our sad task to reprobate the reproduction of a small version of this same cupola as it appears on the National Gallery and on the London University. If this was so, what words are left to us in which to treat of such a phenomenon as a terrace of dwelling-houses ornamented with little little cupolæ or domes, out of the top of each of which grows that last resource of decorative ingenuity, a spike. This terrace is an exception to the Grecian character of the rest of the Regent's Park, and is hideous enough to make it surprising that it has not been copied elsewhere.

That stucco, if it is a necessity, is a very dreary one. It has a chill and cheap appearance; it will peel off in bulgy blisters, and will turn green at a moment's notice, and in either of these conditions it presents a gloomy and ruinous appearance, suggestive at once of insolvency and rheumatism. The regency was a great period of revival in the history of stucco, and in the park and street named in commemoration of the reign of George the Re-Gent this peculiar kind of compo is in its glory. Let us give every man, however, his due, and before turning out of the gates of the park just named let us pause by the entrance at the top of Baker Street, and take reverent note of a certain opening or gap next to the gate on which by rights the last houses of Cornwall Terrace should have stood, and which is now used as a play-ground of a fashionable school. If the story goes truly

that gap was left by order of the Regent in order that the view of the country and the green trees might not be shut out from the windows of a certain house at the very top of Baker Street, once one of the Ultimæ Thules of London. That house was the residence of Mrs. Siddons.

For the sake of that gap in Cornwall Terrace—would it be left under similar circumstances now?—for the sake of that space of trees which is the most gracious feature in the Park which it adorns—a fresh green garland laid at the feet of the Tragic Muse—we would fain pardon the defects of the domain of which it forms something more than a negative part, and would even, because of its bearing the same name, look lightly, if truth would let us, on the architectural villanies of Regent Street. How is it possible to do so? What visions of dwarf magnificence, of cheap and cracking splendour, of unsupported sponginess, and crumbling insecurity, rise up before one to check the charitable impulse! That thoroughfare from Waterloo Place to the Langham Church is a triumph of littleness, of base and misplaced economy. It was a fine idea, and should have been carried out well or not at all.

There is—as will be shown at the end of this paper—an intention in this stroll through the streets of London which has furnished the matter for the last communication of your Eye-witness, as well as for this present report, and it is not without a definite object that this examination of our buildings public and private has been engaged in. The great thoroughfare, a mile or so long, which has just been mentioned, is a standing monument of warning against a half-done work. It is a warning against compromise, and against a fearful acceptance. Whatever we accept at all we should accept thoroughly, boldly, and with all that it involves. This truth is more important than it seems; and there are other things at stake in connexion with it besides the beauty and stability of our town. To accept a great scheme, but to stunt and clip it in its development, is a timid and miserable weakness, yet one into which we in this country are very

apt to fall. The reader's attention is earnestly invited to these words, and to what follows. An enormous outlay, consistently, unflinchingly, *but judiciously* disbursed, is the way to secure enormous repayment. A timid outlay, a half liberality, is always extravagant and unremunerative. From the sublime inculcation that the liberal soul shall be made fat, to the teaching of a game at vingt-et-un, the same truth appears, that the great ventures answer, and that a timid half-confidence is ruinous.

But it will be asked, what are you to do if you have not the means of making this great venture, and of carrying the splendid design splendidly out? The answer to this is a simple one. It is the history of many of the greatest achievements which the world has known—persist. Adopt the plan, carry out as much of it as you can do perfectly, and go on adding to it as your means allow. Or, if the thing to be performed must of necessity be done quickly, then it is necessary to make a great sacrifice of means at once, holding on till the repayment comes; or else to do as great traders do—mortgage the future, and become hampered with a temporary loan in the full confidence of an ultimate triumph. With an enterprise BASED ON WISE PRINCIPLES once entered on, the war-cry of him who would carry it profitably through, should be 'Nothing venture, nothing have;' and it is safe to believe (always remembering that the enterprise must be a wise one) that the greater the outlay the greater will be the return.

Comparison, though odious, is the surest of tests—nay, perhaps it is because of its shrewdness in that capacity that it *is* odious. Let any one remember his first walk down Regent Street after a return from Paris, and he will at once see how far the English thoroughfare is from what it ought to be. Nay, compare this street with some we have recently built, or some portion of those we have recently built, in the City. This business-like part of our capital furnishes indeed an example in this respect to the gay West End, and one that in some respects we should do well to follow.

The splendour of a street depends almost entirely on height in the houses of which it is composed. Nay, what is more remarkable yet, a street bordered by low houses will not look even so *wide*, as one of the same breadth whose houses are high. It is a new theory, but one founded, as your Eye-witness believes, on fact, that size in one way assists instead of impeding the effect of size in another way. An instance of this, as it applies to streets, has just been given, and many more might be added. A large room which is lofty will look larger than a room the same size which has a low ceiling, and a tall man who is very stout as well, will look taller than a man of the same height who is thin. The immense houses in Cannon Street by no means narrow that thoroughfare, but, on the contrary, add to its spaciousness of appearance, and seem strangely enough to afford a breathing space of greater magnitude than is afforded by the dwarfed habitations in Regent Street. The tall houses seem to fetch down and enclose for your use a larger space of air than the short ones do. You take no account of the air above the house-tops.

In reviewing the past history, the present condition, and the future prospects of what may be called the domestic architecture of our town, it is impossible not to be struck with the same conviction of a dire decline, and a recent revival, of taste, which the public buildings suggested to us last week. The old specimens which still remain in different parts of our town—we should have had many more but for that fatal fire—the old gabled houses of the Elizabethan time, projecting forward story by story up to the top of the house, are picturesque and delightful. In the time which succeeded this—the Whitehall period—there is still infinite satisfaction to be derived from the gray stone buildings ornamented with stone garlands, or sometimes even with palms of glory tied together by the handles. There is a certain mansion so decorated facing the Green Park, and next on the north side to the palace of the Earl of Ellesmere. The palms lie underneath a circular window in the middle of the pediment,

the whole effect of which arrangement is admirable, as is indeed everything about that house, with its stone pillars, its terrace with balustrades; and, most attractive of all decorations, its atmosphere of past associations gathering before it and beautifying its every stone. Let any one turn his back for a moment on this building and look across at Buckingham Palace, and he will see that mere size is not alone and in itself impressive. There are such houses as this Green Park mansion in nooks and corners about London, that you light upon by chance after a thirty years' residence in the town. At the bottom of Davies Street, and not many yards from the Berkeley Square end of Mount Street, there is one of these out-of-the-way houses, of a period probably just after that last named, and which is called Bourdon House. For a compact and jovial little heap of masonry, this quaint mansion, with its red brick facings, its high roof, and its little enclosed court-yard of trees, has hardly its equal anywhere.

In the time of Anne and afterwards, when the rows of red-brick houses with white sashes to the windows, which were flush with the wall, prevailed, there was still a comfortable and solid look about the streets, which was pleasant enough to the eye. Such rows of houses are to be seen in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, in King's Bench Walk, Temple, and in many other localities; and if destitute of pretension to beauty, they are still pleasant to look at, and infinitely refreshing in comparison with the next race of wholly uncharacteristic tenements which succeeded them, and with a consideration of which this paper began.

It is a pleasant thing to know, most certainly, that we are now, architecturally speaking, in a hopeful way. Not only in the matter of Public Buildings, but in the generally improved taste which shows itself here and there in individual houses, and which tells us plainly that were our town to build again, we should have no more such streets as Regent Street, no more such squares as that of Trafalgar. The new buildings in the City, to which allusion has already been made, go

far to prove this. The London Restaurant, at the corner of Chancery Lane, is a good specimen of them, and is in every way a fine and handsome edifice. The silver-plate warehouse of Mr. Sarl in Cornhill, too, though its magnificent shop is hardly filled with impressive-looking wares, is in itself a really handsome building. The National Discount Company's office, in the same street; the new Central Telegraph Station, opposite the Exchange; the new offices and houses in Mincing Lane, and some in Fenchurch Street,—all these, and many more, give unmistakeable signs of a move in the right direction, even when, as is sometimes the case, there is something left to be desired in the matter of taste. But perhaps the most successful of all these city attempts at improved architecture is to be found in Bridge Street, Blackfriars, at the Crown Life Office, No. 33. Allowing for the mediæval treatment which has been adopted, and which prevents it from being a perfect example of the manner of our own day, this house may be considered an almost perfect specimen of its kind.

Nor is the movement which has taken place in the City, and which makes it bid fair to become a city of palaces in due time, altogether unrepresented at the West End also. Besides the splendour of some of the buildings about the new Kensington, and the Palace Gardens of the old; besides our more recent clubs, some of which, and the Carlton especially, are very good—this building would be nearly perfect, but for the incongruity between the polished marble columns and the rough stonework at the door, which looks as if it was placed there to tear the coat-tails of the members as they go in and out; besides such mansions as that recently completed for Mr. Holford, in Park Lane, and which with all its splendour, by-the-by, does not give one half the pleasure which the neighbouring house, belonging to Lord Ward, affords to the passer-by,—besides all these, there are other and still more recent evidences of an awakening of improved taste in our London buildings. Before the late revivals in taste, such a house as that situated at No.

114 Piccadilly, could never have been built. Hardly any one would pass down this great throughfare without noticing it. Its richness of ornament, its Gothic windows, and the striking effect of the black marble introduced about them, are remarkable and beautiful, and, but for the want of anything suggestive of our own day, would be perfectly satisfactory.

Such costly experiments, however, as this just quoted, are of little general importance, when the improvement which is needed is on a large scale; and certain attempts at a decorative style, conducted at a less costly rate of expenditure, are publicly of greater value and importance. At the corner of Duke Street and Buckingham Street, Adelphi, there is a house which, made of cheap materials arranged in a fashion which is picturesque and agreeable, is in every way an interesting and important essay. There are other such buildings in Southampton Street, Strand, and in Endell Street. In these houses coloured and decorated tiles have been introduced with admirable effect, lighting up the whole structure, and setting smoke and dirt at defiance by reason of their glazed surface, from which every speck is washed away by the first shower of rain. The defect of these houses seems to be a certain hot and foxy colour about them, which is attributable to the combination of the occasional red bricks with the yellowish brown ones, of which the structure is mainly formed. There is a white, or stone-coloured brick now in use both in the new buildings in the City, as the London Dining-rooms mentioned above, and in some of the recent West-end improvements, as in the houses just completed in South Audley Street, which has a much more agreeable colour than the ordinary West Drayton brick, and which, with the addition of stone copings, or even of such tiles as those used on the Adelphi house alluded to above, would be very pleasant and cheerful in its effect. These stone-coloured bricks require something of the sort to break their monotony; a demand which it is by no means difficult to fulfil. The effect of a red-brick house, pointed with stone-coloured mortar is, as we all know, very good; why

not reverse this, and try a house of stone-coloured bricks, with mortar stained of a red tint. Supposing this impossible, the introduction of some red bricks among these gray ones, or, as has been said just now, of real stone copings or decorated tiles, is sufficiently agreeable. The superiority of these light-coloured bricks to stucco is in every way great, as they are, to begin with, of a pleasanter tint, and are a real thing; while the other is a counterfeit.

One more suggestion, which seems an important one, and which owes its origin to the tiles introduced on the Adelphi house. Would it be impossible to use a kind of glazed tiles, or bricks, with their external side glazed, for the main surfaces of a house? If this were feasible—and it seems hard to see why it should not be so—the advantage gained in a town like ours would be enormous, from the fact that, in the first place, dirt would be slow to lodge on such a surface; and that, supposing it had lodged there, a shower of rain would cleanse the whole house in a couple of minutes. Surely such an experiment as this would at any rate be worth trying.

In pleading the cause of these street improvements, one is advocating a movement of real importance. It is impossible to deny that the appearance of the outsides of the houses which you pass in the course of your walk, has a considerable effect on the animal spirits, and that he who really takes pains with the external part of his place of abode to make it look cheerful and pretty, is conferring a great benefit on society at large. Much may be done in this way by a judicious breaking up of the house front with verandahs, jalouses, and Venetian blinds; nay, the pattern of your muslin curtains as they show through the plate-glass; the flowers philanthropically placed in the windows, the broad-plate of brass on which the half-blinds of your bedrooms run; all these things contribute to make the house look delightful, and to convey a good impression of you, its unknown proprietor, to the passer-by. There is a certain house in Berkeley Street, the thoroughfare which leads from Piccadilly

to Berkeley Square, which it is impossible to pass by without a sensation of pleasure. It is the last house next to the stables, which occupy the larger portion of the street in question, and having no architectural pretensions, is a triumph of what may be done with almost any habitation by means of balconies, plate-glass, bright paint, and here and there a touch of gilding.

Let us hope that we shall lose no more opportunities of improving London. We have already missed some chances which one never thinks of without regret. Such a chance was lost when the thoroughfare which used to go by the name of the New Road was allowed to fall into the hands of unrestricted builders, who were allowed to do what they pleased with the valuable ground which borders that line of road. A great and important means of communication between the City and the western extremity of London, situated at a convenient distance from the centre of the town and its public offices, accessible to the fresh air, which comes down with little interruption from Hampstead and Highgate,—this site was one possessed of peculiar and unparallelled advantages, and bordered on either side by trees, and houses set back in gardens, away from the noises of the road, might have been the most attractive place of residence in London, and at the same time a splendid feature in our capital. But to have organised such a Boulevard as this—and the road in question occupies much such a situation with regard to central London as the Boulevard does to central Paris—to have organised such a thoroughfare as has been here suggested, it was necessary that the whole arrangement should have been under Government superintendence and Government restriction. The buildings which line either side of the New Road have sprung up by degrees, have been built by different contractors at different times, and on different scales of expenditure. Let us follow the history of this thoroughfare from the beginning.

The New Road does, in the course of its career, play many parts. Starting in life, at the Finsbury extremity, as a prosperous tradesman, it very soon, on getting through a certain

turnpike-gate which separates it from the City, seems to have passed in some way the bounds of the respectable, and deteriorates from that moment sadly. It becomes a stick-vendor, an apple-stall proprietor, a potato-can holder, a sixpenny photograph purveyor, and is pervaded generally by a hand-to-mouth character, which is anything but prepossessing. At this point of his career, too, certain tavern-haunting propensities are conspicuous, and Eagle Taverns, Grecian Saloons, and Jacob's Wells (which are not filled with water), at once account for, and prey upon, his poverty. Emerging at length from this degraded condition, our friend has, as will happen to those who fall into low habits, for some time an uphill career of it. He makes tremendous efforts at respectability, pretends a fondness for water-drinking, of which he provides a reservoir, assumes a spurious benevolence in surrounding himself with infirmaries, always for some specially unpleasant form of suffering; he also builds a penitentiary and a dissenting chapel or two. It will not do, however, and by the time he has been at this sort of thing for some time, he suddenly finds that he is going down the hill very fast, and that it is necessary that something should promptly be done to keep him on the road at all. He has been spending his money in the manner just described, and has been doing nothing to refill his purse. He enters accordingly into all sorts of lucrative but squalid undertakings; lends himself to chandlery; goes in more than ever for photography, in which he has always been more or less concerned; makes fresh arrangements with omnibus companies; sets up as a clothier on Battlebridge, painting his name on every wall and gate within twenty miles of London, and exhibiting pendant mechanics' suits of moleskin clothing, to entrap the engineers and stokers from the neighbouring railway. There is no end to his energy and to the struggles which he makes at this particular time, or to the success which might have attended him if he had gone on; but it is not in his nature. The worst part of his character is, that as soon as he has got a little money together he will always

retire and play the gentleman. This he does immediately after the commercial spurt just mentioned, and beyond some dealings with Morrison's pills, an occasional transaction in dentistry, a certain amount of photographic performance, and some small dealings in the tobacco line, may be said to be living quite in retirement. Whether it is that these means of living are more lucrative than they appear, or that he is penitent on account of having had a hand in Morrison's pills, it is not easy to say; but certain it is that about this time he builds a church richly ornamented with caryatides, and retires into a handsome square of his own building.

Here one would think might naturally come a termination of his career. No such thing; there are all sorts of new trials, new successes, and new failures in store for him. After enjoying his retirement in the square for some time, he seems again to have become straitened in his resources, or to have exceeded his income, and once more contracts very much in his ideas and habits. But even this economy, and the arrangement with the omnibus company, which was the only commercial undertaking which he had kept up, proving insufficient to bring him round, he is actually, and at a comparatively advanced period in his career, compelled once more to have recourse to business transactions on a large and varied scale. It is melancholy to see our friend obliged at this advanced age to struggle like a mere beginner. He sets up more photographic establishments than ever; he goes into small ways of business as well as large; he sells zinc baths and distorted chimneys at the same time that he purveys fried fish, sweetmeats, and confectionary plums; he lets out ladders, so tall that the tops of them are quite dim, for hire; he keeps coffee-shops with gigantic teapots, and symmetrical chops in the window; he enters into relations with other roads communicating with other parts of the town and with Hampstead; he mixes his commerce, having always a philanthropic turn, with soup kitchens, and does a good deal also in the tavern business, for which he has also from time to time manifested a considerable liking. There

is, in short, no end to our friend's efforts at this particular time; and from a menagerie where you can get a silver pheasant, to a confectioner's shop, where you can solace yourself with a penny ice—there is nothing that he does not provide you with.

Nor, in spite of the somewhat advanced period in our friend's career, which he has now reached, does he hesitate to break out into new exertions in the stone-masonry line. He lays himself out to captivate with stone lions, with copies of the antique in the same material, with griffins, shepherdesses, and drinking-fountains. Nor is the cemetrial part of this exhilarating line lost sight of, but, on the contrary, weeping and shivering infants upon tombs, broken columns, and those most touching and appropriate monuments of all, which consist of polished marble obelisks, are to be found in these wayside studios, not to mention the inverted torch, which would be the aptest emblem of extinguished life that we could have, if it did not happen that when a torch is turned upside down it usually burns brighter than ever.

The consequence of this tremendous show of energy in stone-masonry and pastrycooks' shops kept by seedy Italians, who sell *meringues* at two a penny—the consequence of all this perseverance and enterprise soon becomes sufficiently obvious in the unprecedentedly flourishing aspect taken next by our friend's fortunes. First of all he builds another church, and then he plunges at once into fashionable life. He makes acquaintances of an aristocratic kind, enlarges his sphere of action to the utmost attainable amount, connects himself with a great national property on the one side, and with the mansions of the nobility, towards which he advances with a graceful curve, on the other; he becomes mixed up with the aristocratic families of Portland, Harley, and Wimpole, and is during this portion of his career admitted to associations on almost equal terms with these great people; he offers entertainment to the Duke of Brunswick, and then, feeling that he has made a mistake in this, he builds another church, dedicated to St. Marie la Bonne, and soon after a

workhouse offered at the same shrine, with a drinking-fountain in its central wall, to afford every means of exhilaration to the paupers and the relatives who come to visit them.

After this point the long career of our good friend again gives symptoms of decline. For a long time he makes tremendous efforts at respectability; but his views are one-sided, and whilst his right hand is extended towards the better classes of society, his left is intimately clasped by persons of a lower grade. Philanthropic to the last, the subject of this brief memoir erects an expensive establishment in the bath and washhouse department, a lying-in hospital, and a dispensary, and then retiring into a very quiet way of life indeed, expires at last in the Edgeware Road, having previously set up a son and daughter in business on each side of his final resting-place, the son in the shoemaking way on a very large scale indeed, and the daughter in the bonnet line on a scale of even greater splendour and magnificence.

Such, treated in a vein of metaphor which it is hoped may suit the reader's humour, is the history of a thoroughfare left to itself. The experiment is hardly satisfactory. It is not, however, contended that every street and every row of houses are to be the result of a previously conceived plan, but only that some of our main and principal thoroughfares should be so. There is no harm in occasional irregularity, if only each item that contributes to that irregularity be good in itself. The irregularity of Park Lane constitutes one of its greatest charms, and that of the row of houses which forms the eastern boundary of the Green Park, and one of which has already been specially indicated, is very delightful. Has the reader ever examined that range of buildings?—he can hardly do so without pleasure; it is quite unique of its kind. One house, set far back, and with an entrance in Albemarle Street, is red-tiled like an old manor-house, another is roofed with green slate, such as that which covers Kensington Palace—the most delightful of roofs. In fact these old houses are almost all different; alike

only in looking as if they were far out of London, and in possessing such terraced gardens as it delights one to see, and in which ladies and children walk about and amuse themselves as if the clubs of St. James's Street and the bustle of Piccadilly were a hundred miles away.

It is true then that such irregularity as this may be, and is most desirable, more especially in the dwelling-house department of our domestic architecture, but it is still also desirable that in the more central portions of our town, and in some one part of it at least, we should have a great show thoroughfare which should be characterised by a certain degree of symmetry and even uniformity of design.

An opportunity—and it is the dawning of that opportunity which is one of the chief reasons why these words are written—an opportunity has arrived of redeeming the reputation of our town, such as we have, all things considered, never had before and shall probably never have again. There is one feature of our capital—a natural, not a made advantage—which gains, or might gain, for it, a nobleness and splendour which would set the rival city across the channel altogether at defiance. Paris is lost, and London is saved, by its river. A rushing whirl of mud and sewage, a great tide of defilement and pestilence, the Thames is yet the glory of our town, at once its main beauty and its chief disfigurement. Who that stands one day—as he may do—on the Pont Neuf and the next on Blackfriars Bridge, will fail to see that in the first case the town deserves a better river, and that in the second the river deserves a better town. Ours has grown up like a neglected child, much as it likes, without plan, without restriction, with here and there, as will happen too with the child, a fine quality, an agreeable characteristic, and with one great and noble gift of nature which, obscured and marred through neglect, is there nevertheless, and which is so fine and glorious a treasure that even in its most impaired condition it commands our respect and calls loudly for our culture. This gift of nature, in the case of our metropolis, is, as has been said before, so noble

and grand a feature that all our neglect and our foul usage have failed to destroy it. It is there doing much for us as it is, and ready to do much more if we would let it.

A plan has been repeatedly urged upon the notice of Parliament by Sir Joseph Paxton, for the formation of a line of quays on either side of the Thames, extending from the Houses of Parliament to London Bridge; the requisite ground for the purpose being redeemed from the river by embankment. Here at last is a chance of carrying out that without which no range of public buildings can be perfectly impressive and consistent—a plan. Here in the very centre and eye of our town, and in connexion with its finest feature, is an opportunity of constructing a thoroughfare which, in the relief which it would afford to those which are at present unendurably crowded, would be perfectly useful, and which might be so ornamental as well as to alter the whole character of our town, and win for it by that one bold stroke a name for something besides mere size, among the cities of the world.

But to attain this object it is necessary to go to work in no careless or slipshod way. It will not do to give a bare permission that the thing may be begun, and to leave it in private hands to work the scheme out after their own plans and in their own fashion. If we are to take the improvement of our river—figured but now as the great redeeming quality in our neglected child—if we are to take this in hand to any purpose we must do it as everything should be done, heartily, not leaving the elimination of this bright gift—it is dull enough now—to hirelings and servants, but looking to it, and ordering it, and that with no half-attentive energies or sluggish purpose—OURSELVES.

XXI.

HIS EVIDENCE CONCERNING THE WISDOM AND ABILITY DISPLAYED BY THOSE PERSONS WHOSE FUNCTION IT IS TO SELECT THE PICTURES FOR OUR NATIONAL GALLERY.

PROCEEDING with that examination of the leading ornamental characteristics of our metropolis, which has included its statues, its public buildings, and some of its private houses and shops, we come next to a consideration of a certain collection of pictures lodged in one of the public buildings which has been already described (not favourably), and which collection, though secured within the shelter of walls and a roof, must yet be looked upon as one of the public decorative features of London.

The public—especially the British public—is long-suffering and patient. It takes for the most part what is given to it, and bears for the most part what is inflicted on it, with a gentle acquiescence. So long as it is allowed to yawn occasionally, and to change frequently its supporting leg from the right to the left and back again, it will submit to almost any amount of boring that its tormentors think proper to inflict. The fact is that the public is in the mass reverential, and has an implicit confidence—heaven help it—in Professors. When Professor Conkey tells it that it must go through a collection of ten thousand cases full of shells, when Professor Pradam commands its attention to a similar number of shelves of fossils, or Fluffey to a million or two of moths, every grain of whose down becomes at last a weight of tons upon the spectator's spirits—when these Professors call upon the public to go through these ordeals, the public 'supposes it is all right,' and changing its leg with every fresh drawer or cupboard as the case may be, does as it is bid.

But know, oh much enduring and sweet-tempered public! that you are none the less being taken in and cruelly dealt with in these matters, and that a reformer and a protector

is at hand to deliver you from the tyranny under which you are suffering. Professor Fudge—David Fudge—commonly called the Eye-witness—is determined to turn king's evidence upon all other Professors, and to help you to throw their yoke off, to think for yourselves, and to become emancipated once and for ever from a blind allegiance to 'collections.'

It so happens that the subject on which the E. W. is now speaking is one on which he is able to give his opinion confidently, and on which he fears contradiction from no one. It moves his pity to see how the public is treated, and how cruelly its credulity is abused. It is pitiful to see how when Professor—suppose we call him Waghorn—when Professor Waghorn tells the public he is going to enunciate an opinion, it, the public, 'waits for the Waghorn, and his sentiments, and believes implicitly. What your Eye-witness has to propose, by way of remedy, is a simple and easily organised arrangement. He proposes that in all collections of scientific and artistic treasure there shall be two departments: one for the public, containing the things which it gives that public pleasure to see; and one for the Professors, consisting of all the boring things which it gives the public pain to see—AND FOR WHICH THE PROFESSORS THEMSELVES SHALL PAY.

Now, this question concerning the national collection of pictures in Trafalgar Square, being one of considerable importance, your Eye-witness desires to give in his report rather in the form of legal evidence than in any less formal and exact manner. He will suppose himself, with the reader's permission, in a witness-box before a Jury, consisting of the whole of his fellow-countrymen, Professor Waghorn, and the ghost of Sir George Beaumont on the Bench. The evidence given by the Eye-witness—who mounts the witness-box with a catalogue of the national collection in his hand, and who presents rather a worn appearance (in consequence, probably, of his recent researches)—is to this effect:—

His name is Fudge—David Fudge. His residence at No. 2, Lumbago Terrace. Has had a long and careful art-education, and has been engaged during a great period of his

life in art-studies, considers himself therefore qualified to give an opinion on all matters connected with the fine arts. Has been to the National Gallery. Has been recently—yesterday, in fact. Thinks there are some very noble pictures in that collection. Thinks also that there is a great deal of rubbish (shudder through the frame of the ghost of Sir George Beaumont). Thinks the public money has in some cases been judiciously spent in the purchase of pictures. In other cases thinks it has been wasted in a most monstrous manner. Is of opinion that the only thing that justifies the disbursement of the public money in pictures is intrinsic merit *in* those pictures. Is also of opinion that the purchase at immense expense of works of art, which are not good specimens of the masters they represent, and which are bought simply because they are *by* those masters, is a mistaken proceeding. Supposing such a thing possible, as that some National Library could only secure a copy of Castle Dangerous with which to represent SIR WALTER SCOTT, or of Titus Andronicus as a specimen of SHAKESPEARE; thinks they would do better to have no specimen of those masters at all. If Professor Waghorn thinks that is not evidence, and would be glad to know what the Witness means, will give as an instance the purchase of a picture, called, 'The Adoration of the Magi,' said to be by PAUL VERONESE, which is not a good picture, and by no means worth the money expended on it.

The ghost of Sir George Beaumont wishes to know whether Professor Fudge is aiming a blow at the reputation of Paolo Veronese.

Mr. Fudge (resuming his evidence) is of opinion that Paolo Veronese is one of the greatest painters that ever lived, but that the picture alluded to is either a bad one, or a spurious one, and that the authorities who purchased it would have done better to wait; as indeed the event has proved—a very fine specimen of this master, 'The Family of Darius,' having since come into the possession of the nation.

Professor Waghorn would like to inquire if there is anything else in which Mr. Smudge would like to impugn the

judgment of persons who—or they would not be employed by government—are infallible.

The Witness (remarking in passing that his name is not Smudge, but Fudge) deposes that there are a great many more things in which he is at issue with those infallible persons spoken of by Professor Waghorn. Witness finds on reference to the catalogue which he holds in his hand that there are in the national collection eleven works by RUBENS, seven of which are purchases made with the public money. That of those seven pictures three only are good for anything, 'the Rape of the Sabines,' lucidly described in the catalogue as 'a tumultous group of men and women in violent struggle,' the landscape, called 'Rubens' Chateau,' and 'The Judgment of Paris.' The rest, which are poor affairs (shiver from Sir George Beaumont), can only be excused as purchases if they were inevitable parts of a 'lot' which the country wanted.

Professor Waghorn wishes Witness to explain himself.

Mr. Fudge will have the greatest pleasure in doing so. What he means may be best shown by an instance. Witness had been present that morning at a sale of general property, at which a nice pair of washing-tubs were put up for auction. Witness wished to purchase the washing-tubs for domestic purposes, but found that they were inseparably mixed up with a cockatoo's cage, several flat irons, and two carpet brooms, which he did not require. He accepted, however, the supererogatory appendages because he wanted the tubs, and he supposes, in his fairness, that Government may have been obliged to do the like with regard to some of the national pictures. Witness would think that the pictures called respectively 'The Triumph of Julius Cæsar,' 'The Horrors of War,' and 'The Apotheosis of William the Taciturn,' must have come into the possession of this unfortunate country under some such circumstances.

Professor Waghorn has a distinct recollection of the two first of these magnificent works, but would be obliged if the Witness would refresh his memory with regard to the last.

The 'Apotheosis' of William the Taciturn,' the Witness continues, is a picture representing a gentleman going up to heaven in a cuirass and jack-boots, assisted by numerous angels, who look heavy enough to require some aid themselves in getting off the ground, and one of whom has a helmet on. A disagreeable-looking man, who probably found the silent William a congenial companion, is trying to hold him down to earth, while a strange and hitherto unknown animal, compounded of a lioness, a mastiff, and a bull-calf, is kicking up its heels below in evident joy at William's removal from a sphere where he contributed so little to the general satisfaction of society. (At this point a juryman presuming to laugh, Professor Waghorn directs that he be instantly removed).

Sir George Beaumont begs to inquire whether Mr. Fudge is aware that in objecting to certain purchases of pictures by PETER PAUL RUBENS, he has uttered an implied censure on the judgment of those persons who brought the glorious picture called 'The Brazen Serpent?'

Mr. Fudge is perfectly aware that he has implied such a censure. He thinks that that picture does not justify the outlay of the public money by the Trustees of the National Gallery at a time when they were possessed of such good specimens of this master as are to be found in 'The Rape of the Sabines' and the magnificent landscape of 'Rubens' Chateau,' presented by one of the gentlemen he sees before him on that bench. Sir George Beaumont rises and bows, and remarks that he is glad Mr. Fudge can appreciate *that* work at any rate. After which the witness goes on to say that the warning afforded by the collection at the Louvre in Paris should make any nation careful how they overwhelmed themselves with pictures by the distinguished artist whose works were under discussion.

Dr. Waghorn inquires whether Witness has anything else to object to. Mr. Fudge replies that he has a great deal, that he has only in fact just begun objecting. He objects to a couple of pictures by Guido,—one of Susannah assaulted by two mahogany Elders (a laugh turned into a sneeze by a

juryman), and the other of a mahogany Lot and two daughters. He also objects to a vile Magdalen by the same artist.

Sir George Beaumont wishes to know whether the Eye-witness is aiming——

Yes, Mr. Fudge replies, this time he is aiming a blow at the artist in question, and he considers it an atrocious waste of the national money to have spent it in the works just mentioned, especially when they were already in possession of the picture of 'Perseus and Andromeda,' presented to the country by William IV.

Professor Waghorn would be glad if Mr. Fudge would inform him what he means by objecting to what he calls the 'mahogany' flesh-tints of the Elders, and of the figure of Lot in the two pictures just spoken of. Is he not aware that the colour he so designates has been frequently used by the masters in depicting the more elderly persons introduced in their pictures?

Witness replies that he is perfectly conscious of that circumstance, and that, without going out of the National Gallery itself, he finds, on reference to his marked catalogue, two more instances of mahogany at once. In another picture of 'Susannah and the Elders' by Ludovico Carracci, and in a work by Annibale Carracci of 'Erminia taking refuge with the Shepherds,' he finds that the elders by whom Susannah is beset are again mahogany elders, and that the shepherds with whom Erminia is taking refuge are mahogany shepherds. He is not, however reconciled by these facts to the phenomena in question.

Professor Waghorn, inquiring if Mr. Fudge has done insulting the memory of Guido? the Eye-witness replies that he has done, for the present at any rate, as he finds that the other works by this master in the Gallery, including a daub called 'The Ecce Homo,' another daub entitled 'The Coronation of the Virgin,' and a third of a depressing nature, representing St. Jerome usefully employed in hammering his breast with a stone, came into the possession of the country by gift or bequest.

Sir George Beaumont is understood at this juncture to

murmur a request that he may be removed and decent interment accorded to him. (Evidence resumed).

Mr. Fudge finds, on reference to the catalogue, that two pictures under the name of Titian, numbered respectively 224 and 635, were purchased, the first in the year 1852, the second in this present 1860. He considers that neither of these works was wanted, and that a collection, in which the splendid picture of 'Bacchus and Ariadne' is to be found, does not stand in need of such an addition as the very indifferent performance now placed next to it. Such purchases as these were again a waste of the public money, which there seems nothing to excuse.

Dr. Waghorn remarks that perhaps Mr. Fudge objects to the portrait of Ariosto by the master some of whose works he has presumed to disparage.

The Eye-witness replies that he considers the portrait of Ariosto by TITIAN, which has just been added to the collection, to be one of the most remarkable and interesting pictures in the National Gallery. The acquiring of such a work might possibly justify the purchase of other pictures which were inevitable parts of the same 'lot.' If this excuse were offered Witness would allow it, but it would not justify the authorities in keeping such unwelcome parts of their bargain. If any pictures were obliged to be purchased under such circumstances, the unwelcome parts of the 'lot' should be resold, or if nobody could be found to buy them, should be put away and hidden from human eyes.

A Juryman.—Why?

Witness.—Because the presence of bad pictures among the good, impairs very seriously the aspect of the whole collection, and by adding to the number of objects which solicit the eyes, fatigue the visitor to the gallery, and confuses him in an unnecessary degree.

Professor Waghorn at this point interposed, and said that he thought the manner of arranging his evidence which Professor Fudge had adopted was likely to lead to confusion, and that it would be better if he took a chronological view

of the subject of the different art purchases made by the Committee, and examined the additions to the national collection which had been effected each succeeding year.

The Eye-witness had no objection to such an arrangement. There was no occasion to revert to some of the earlier purchases which had been already alluded to. The ANGERSTEIN Gallery formed the nucleus of the collection; it was unnecessary to criticise it. In the year 1825, succeeding that of the opening of the National Gallery at Mr. Angerstein's house, a bad CORREGGIO of a Holy Family was added to the collection. It is separated from other similar subjects in the catalogue description, by the distinction of a 'toilet basket' in the foregound; but as the only discernible contents of the said basket are some enormous gardening shears, there seems reason to doubt the propriety of this description, as there certainly is the judiciousness of the purchase. A picture by ANNIBALE CARRACCI, a magnificent TITIAN of Bacchus and Ariadne, and a group of bacchanalian miscreants dancing, a good specimen of NICOLE POUSSIN, came into the possession of the country; and in 1834 another CORREGGIO, 'Mercury instructing Cupid in the presence of Venus;' and yet another, and an especially bad one, called 'The Ecce Homo.' A 'Holy Family' by MURILLO; the 'Brazen Serpent' (a purchase alluded to above, as of doubtful wisdom), and a SALVATOR ROSA, were bought by the Trustees; and in 1839, the St. Catherine of RAPHAEL, a Holy Family by MAZZOLINI (not a very well-known artist), and a similar subject by GAROFALO. Concerning these three pictures, Mr. Fudge affirms that the first is an exceedingly bad specimen of one of the most renowned artists of the world; that the second is an exceedingly bad specimen of one of the least renowned artists of the world; and that the third is an exceedingly bad specimen of a painter who comes between these two designations, and is neither wholly unknown, nor widely celebrated. The first of these purchases was, however, justifiable, which is more than can be said for the other *two*. The country (supposing it wanted one) was already in

possession of a Holy Family by MAZZOLINI, bequeathed by the REV. W. H. CARR, and certainly did not want another. There is a certain amount of deception about these pictures too, for a very evil saint who is kneeling in the foreground of each of these gems, and whose villanous face is too terrible to be mistaken, is in one case called St. Nicholas, and in the other St. Francis.

Sir George Beaumont, at this point in the evidence, remarked that there must be some mistake here, and he wishes he could consult the deceased CARR upon the subject; was it possible he could do so? Did there happen to be a Medium among the jury?

The Eye-witness replied that if there were he should certainly challenge that juryman and demand his withdrawal. After a discussion of some warmth, and after Professor Waghorn had with some difficulty succeeded in restoring order, the evidence was again resumed.

Mr. Fudge submitted that in 1840 a judicious purchase was made of MURILLO'S St. John; and an injudicious one of a Magdalen by GUIDO: that in 1841, two pictures by FRANCIA—one of them the Pieta, an especially good specimen; and an unnecessary Holy Family, by PERUGINO, were added to the National Gallery; and that in '42 a beautiful example of VAN EYCK was also wisely secured to the country. The year 1843 saw that wondrous achievement, the exchange of current coin of the realm for the picture described above of 'The Apotheosis of William the Taciturn,' a transaction without precedent in the annals of folly and waste. In 1844, a very fine and interesting portrait of a Doge, by BELLINI; 'Christ and St. John,' by GUIDO; a portrait of himself, by GERARD DOW; and our best specimen of RUBENS—'The Choice of Paris,' were bought with great judgment; as well as a Jewish Rabbi, by REMBRANDT, without which the country could have kept up its spirits perfectly well; and the hateful 'Lot and his Daughters' of Guido—succeeded the next year by the 'Susannah and the Elders' of the same artist. The next six years were characterized by the judicious acquire-

ment of the much-discussed 'Boar-hunt' of VELASQUEZ, the 'Vision of a Knight,' by RAPHAEL, and a portrait of REMBRANDT, by himself. The unwise purchases to be set against these were 'The Tribute Money,' of TITIAN, the Portrait of a Gentleman, by VAN EYCK, and the 'Temptations of St. Anthony,' by CARRACCI. The 'temptations' held out to the Saint in this picture are of the following irresistible kind. A demon with four fingers and no thumbs; a lion with horns; a dragon upside down, making a face; and a Fury holding a serpent by the tip of its tail. Mr. Fudge is of opinion that more tempting morsels than any of these might easily have been found with which to lure the saint to ruin.

Sir George Beaumont wishes to know whether Mr. Fudge is aiming——

Yes, Mr. Fudge again interrupts, he *is* aiming at saying most decidedly that there are too many Carraccis in the National Gallery; and that the purchase of this new one, though only as big as a soup-plate, is the last hair that breaks the camel's back. Even supposing that this small picture was acquired at a trifling expense (which Witness has his suspicions was not the case), an accumulation of trifling expenses makes a large sum; and if this picture cost only a fourpenny-piece (which would be threepence-halfpenny too much), that fourpenny was a public fourpenny, and the Committee, or by whatever name the Public Enemy was called, had no right to waste it.

Sir George Beaumont is understood to mutter that the Carraccis occupied a high place in the schools; and——

Professor Waghorn requests that the evidence may be continued, and that Mr. Fudge will inform the jury what may be his opinion of the purchases since the year '53, inclusive, down to which period the evidence has now been brought.

Professor Fudge, in turn, wishes to make a preliminary inquiry before answering the learned Doctor's question. He wishes to know for whom the National Gallery is intended: whether for the English Public generally, or for connoisseurs

like the learned Doctor, and enlightened ghosts like his colleague on the bench?

Dr. Waghorn, after a prolonged consultation with Sir George Beaumont, replies, that he thinks that question is not evidence, and declines to answer it as irregular.

Professor Fudge then begs to know whether it is also irregular for him to ask whether the pictures in the National Gallery are purchased with the public money or with that of the connoisseurs and ghosts before mentioned?

Dr. Waghorn replies that this question is also irregular, and Sir George Beaumont is heard to add that it is even 'highly irregular.'

The evidence is then resumed, and Professor Fudge goes on to state that as he is left entirely in the dark touching this matter, the only conclusion he can come to, is, that a national gallery is intended for the delight of the nation, and is paid for with the nation's money ('hear, hear!' from a juryman). Under these assumed circumstances, he (Witness) is of opinion that many of the purchases made during the period spoken of by the learned Doctor are wholly unjustifiable; and he, as one of the Public, begs to enter his protest against them.

Dr. Waghorn begs that Witness will not deal in general accusations, but will come to particulars, with as little delay as possible.

Witness will have great pleasure in doing so. He thinks that no person can glance down the list of the purchases made since the year 1853 (inclusive), and not be much struck by two things: their great number, and the unknown character, for the most part, of the names of those masters to whom they are attributed. He himself having had, as he must beg to remind the jury, a long and careful art education, had, in looking through the catalogue of the National Gallery, found the names of above fifty masters of whom he had never heard. He concluded that they were eminent from finding their names in that catalogue. How was it he (Witness) had never heard of them?

Professor *Waghorn begs* to interrupt the evidence at this

point. He begs to remind Mr. Fudge that if these masters are unknown in this country that is the very reason why their works should be secured in order that they might remain unknown no longer! (a feeble chuckle from the ghost of Sir George Beaumont).

Witness is ready to agree to the remark just made by the learned Doctor, on condition that he is able to prove that the works of these masters are worthy of being known. But he contends that this is not the case. Is the great PACCHIAROTTO—witness begs to inform the jury that this is a real name and that it is *not* the Italian for a pack of rot—is the reputation of the great PACCHIAROTTO worthy of promulgation? Is that of NICCOLO ALUNNO, of LUDGER ZUM RING—in one word, for it is impossible to give all the names of these unknown masters—in one word, what is the meaning of these purchases in such outrageous numbers of pictures which are not by men of great renown, and which are not of themselves intrinsically excellent; and of the collecting, in such vast numbers, of works of the Pre-Raphael period? The National Gallery is half full of them. They have oozed out of the rooms that seem especially assigned to them, and meet one at every turn in all parts of the Gallery, on the staircases, the passages, the hall. Those pictures cannot, in most instances, be regarded in any other light than as curiosities; many, nay most of them, are scarcely works of art at all. (Sir George Beaumont is understood to murmur that they are certainly wanting in 'tone.') Now, is the National Gallery a place for curiosities or for works of art?

Dr. Waghorn is of opinion that it is desirable that there should be some means of tracing the chronological history of art, and that it is therefore necessary that the earlier schools of painting should be represented in a national collection as well as those in which the art of painting is developed in its more mature and cultivated phases.

Professor Fudge is ready to grant that postulate, but he wishes to know whether this may not be done on a less exorbitant fcale than has been recently the case; whether, in *short,* considering the extraordinary likeness of one of these

pictures to another, two or three of them would not be enough? instead of the immense crowd of such works with which the National Gallery is filled to overflowing? Granting that this object of tracing the history of art chronologically from the beginning, is a good one, may it not be done less extravagantly? If it is desirable that there should be more than a specimen or two of the kind of art which existed in the Pre-Raphael period—if it is requisite that each period of the transition from the barbarities of Margaritone and Cimabue down to the glories of Turner should be represented—if this is requisite, may it not be done without the multiplicity of instances given in our present collection? When what is curious chronologically is all that is required, such multiplicity of instances is valueless; the collecting of a number of specimens of one master, or one period, being only justified by beauty and merit in the specimens themselves. The fifteenth century, from about the year 1410 to 1490 inclusive, is represented by the works of thirty-four painters. Of these —all bought within the last six years—only about a dozen names are known to fame. It cannot be said, in justification of the purchase of these pictures, that they are all wanted chronologically as links in the collection, seeing that many of them are of precisely the same date, whilst of very few of them can it be said that their merit or beauty justifies their admission into the National Gallery.

Doctor Waghorn is of opinion that it is desirable, in a great collection, to represent each artist of each period, whether known or otherwise.

Witness would beg to inquire what then will be the course adopted by the art committees of future ages with regard to the thousands of modern painters?

Doctor Waghorn begs to state that he can have nothing to say on a subject so futile, vain, and frivolous, as modern art.

At this point in the proceedings a messenger comes into court, and whispering a few words to the Eye-witness, delivers to him a sealed paper and withdraws. After examining the paper which the messenger has left in his hands,

the Witness is understood to remark that he has just received an important document, bearing in a remarkable degree on the subject in hand, and which has been sent to him by an unknown friend. It is nothing less than an authentic report of the different moneys expended in pictures for the National Collection, from the commencement of the year 1844 down to the present time, together with the names of the persons from whom those pictures were purchased, and other particulars calculated to explain much that was otherwise lost in obscurity.

Doctor Waghorn wishes to know how Witness became possessed of the paper in question?

Witness declines to reply to that inquiry. He has simply to state that he is ready to answer for its authenticity, and that he has it from a source which leaves no possibility of a doubt as to its correctness. He will, therefore, with the jury's permission, proceed at once to impart to them the additional evidence which he has just received.

He is able to give the jury an account of the prices of some of those pictures which have already been alluded to, and to impart to them other information of a startling and bewildering nature. On reference to the document which has just been handed to him, Witness finds that a certain pair of GUIDOS, mentioned in a former part of his evidence in no complimentary terms, viz., 'Susannah and the Elders,' and 'Lot and his Daughters,' were purchased, the first for £1260! and the second for £1680! from a certain Mr. PENRICE, whom witness begs to congratulate on his excellent bargain. It is also revealed by this paper, that a 'Head of a Jewish Rabbi' by REMBRANDT, without which it is certain we could have got on very comfortably, was bought for £473 11*s.*; and a 'Portrait of a Man,' by an unknown artist, for £630,—rather a long price for a cleverly executed portrait of an unknown gentleman, by an unknown painter. The VELASQUEZ 'Boar Hunt,' was not too dearly purchased at £2200, and the 'Vision of a Knight,' by RAPHAEL, was wisely secured, even at the high price (for a picture seven inches square) of £1050. A more

serious waste of money than even that recorded in the case of the two GUIDO pictures succeeds these purchases; the sum of £787 10*s*., having been handed over to LORD DARTMOUTH, for the miserable little picture of the 'Temptation of St. Anthony,' by CARRACCI, which has been described above—a picture nineteen and a half inches high, by thirteen and a half inches wide, and which, it now appears, had not even the merit of cheapness to recommend it. In 1851 a portrait of REMBRANDT, by himself, was bought for £430 10*s*., and a 'Portrait of a Man' by VAN EYCK for £365; an unnecessary purchase, as we already possessed an excellent specimen of the artist. The portrait of Rembrandt was a justifiable acquirement, simply from the fact that a likeness of that master was an interesting addition to the National Collection. Then comes the SOULT picture, TITIAN'S 'Tribute Money.' It has been already mentioned, that, in the opinion of the Eye-witness, this picture was not wanted, that Titian was already well represented before its purchase, and that it is a very inferior specimen of the artist to the 'Bacchus and Ariadne.' In spite of this, there may have been sufficient public curiosity about this picture at the time, (though Witness doubts it) to have justified the laying out of £2604 on its purchase. The 'Franciscan Monk,' by ZARBARAN, bought of Louis Philippe for £265, was not dear at the price, though an uninteresting work enough, and looking at first sight more like a sack of potatoes propped up in a corner than anything else. The 'Adoration of the Shepherds,' by VELASQUEZ, and the 'Warrior adoring the Infant Christ,' by a disciple of the BELLINI school, were both well purchased, though the first cost £2050 and the second £525.

Professor Waghorn remarks that on the whole the Witness is satisfied with the greater number of the purchases made from the year 1844 to the year 1853, inclusive?

Witness replies, that with the exception of the 'Jewish Rabbi,' the TWO GUIDOS ('Lot and his Daughters,' and 'Susannah'), the 'Temptation of St. Anthony,' by CARRACCI, the portrait by VAN EYCK, and that by the unknown artist, purchases which

together amount to a sum of £5496 1*s*., with these exceptions, he is satisfied. But he still, as far as his own opinion goes, has his doubts about the Soult picture. Let that pass however. Witness wishes to point out to the jury how small sums mount up, and what a large sum might have been saved by the rejection of the pictures he has named. He also wishes to ask Dr. Waghorn whether he does not think that that sum of £5496 1*s*. would not have been so large as to have offered an irresistible temptation to the possessors of really fine works by old masters on the Continent, to part with some one unmistakably good picture, which should have been an ornament to our National Gallery.

Dr. Waghorn replies, that the possessors of such works are extremely reluctant to part with them.

The Eye-witness begs to inquire whether the attempt has been made with such energy and address as are thrown into private mercantile transactions, and whether such sums as he has just named have been offered.

The learned Professor is not in a position to answer that question, but will probably do so on an early day next century.

Mr. Fudge, in resuming his evidence, remarks that the next financial statement which he has to lay before the jury, is one of a singular character, and is intimately connected with the appearance on the walls of the National Gallery of some of the most unpopular pictures that have ever hung there—pictures which, if purchased at all, should have been at any rate consigned to a Museum, rather than a National Gallery; but which would have been still better housed in the apartment (if he had any) of their original proprietor the great Herr Kruger of Minden. The Eye-witness wishes to know what the ghost of Sir George Beaumont, Dr. Waghorn, and the jury think is likely to be the nature of a collection, which, numbering no fewer than sixty-four pictures, is to be had for the sum of £2800! or at the rate of not quite £44 per picture? Was that a promising purchase? Were pictures sold at £44 a piece likely to turn out fit works to hang up in the National Collection of the richest country in the world?

Truly this was a cheap lot, but cheap as it was, it turned out not to be worth even the small sum that was given for it. The authorities who bought this lot, seized (as well they might be) with remorse, determined to sell above half of (we will suppose) the worst of them, and thirty-seven of the sixty-four were thrown once more into the market. This mass of more than half the purchase, fetched only £249 8*s*., or at the rate of *not quite £7 per picture* (sensation). The pictures out of this 'lot' which remain are to be seen by any persons who choose to walk into the National Gallery. They were purchased 'by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the public,'—the public is very much obliged to Mr. GLADSTONE, who was in office on that occasion, and who doubtless acted on the advice of some friend with a taste for German art—the public is very much obliged, but would have been still more so, if the £2800 had been left in the Treasury to go towards the purchase of works which they could have looked at with some degree of satisfaction.

Professor Waghorn requests at this juncture that he may not be called upon to listen to any disparaging remarks on the German school of art—the purest, the severest, that ever existed; a school probably beyond the comprehension of the Witness, as it never stooped to solicit by any *ad captandum* means the popularity of the masses, while for the connoisseur and the initiated critic, it possessed attractions that were held out by no other school of any period whatever.

Witness wishes once more to ask whether the connoisseurs and initiated critics alluded to by the learned Doctor, or the ignorant masses with which he had been obliging enough to class him (the Eye-witness), furnish the money with which the National Collection is bought? He appeals to Sir George Beaumont, whether those pictures last alluded to are fit for our National Gallery?

Sir G. Beaumont is really at a loss what to say. His own judgment inclines to the view of the case taken by Mr. Fudge, the pictures being, as he said before, wanting in tone; but then he has the greatest confidence in the opinion of the learned

Doctor Waghorn, who he well knows is incapable of basing his judgment upon any principles but those sanctioned by the 'schools.' On the whole, he declines to give an opinion.

Witness smiles, and begs next to call the attention of the jury to a 'lot' of pictures purchased from one DE BAMMVILLE. They were five in number, and collectively cost £1088 16*s*. Out of this collection a head by ALBERT DURER, price £147, alone, was a desirable purchase, and that chiefly because of the name attached to it. The other pictures are by PACCHIAROTTO—spoken of above—by NICCOLO ALUNO, by SAN SEVERINO, and PHILIPPO LIPPI. There is nothing important enough in this collection to justify its purchase.

In 1855 two pictures by BOTTICELLI, each labelled 'Madonna and Child with Angels,' were bought, and from different proprietors. One of these might certainly have been omitted. So might the 'St. Jerome' of COSIMO ROSSELLI, the Madonna and Child' of VIVARINI, the 'St. Jerome reading' of MARCO BASAITI, and portrait by PORDENONE. Where is this last, by-the-by? It is not in the catalogue nor in the list of pictures re-sold after their purchase. Perhaps it is in the cellars. Can Dr. Waghorn elucidate the difficulty?

Dr. Waghorn is not in a position to answer that question. It is irregular.

With regard to the other pictures of the year 1855, Witness has already expressed his opinion of the 'Adoration of the Magi' by PAUL VERONESE, and he is not reconciled to the purchase by finding it was effected for £1977. He also thinks that the 'Madonna and Child' of MANTEGNA was dear at £1125 12*s*., and that the 'Portrait of a Young Man' by BARTOLOMEUS VENETUS was an unnecessary, though cheap, venture, at £48 10*s*. In the December of the year 1855, a 'deal' appears to have been effected with a certain BARON GALIAGNA, by which transaction that nobleman became possessed of £2189 16*s*. 10*d*., and our happy country of ten pictures, two of which, a TINTORETTO and a JACOPO BASSANO, it parted with again for a consideration of £141; one of which, the BELLINI, it thinks very fine, two more of which,

by SIGNORI TACCONI and DA' LIBRI, it could willingly have dispensed with, and the remaining five of which it is unable to say anything about, for the simple reason that it cannot find them. They are not in the catalogue, they are not in the list of the re-sold; perhaps they are being kept for us till we get wise enough to appreciate them, when we shall be allowed a peep, if we are good. The three principal portions of an Altar-piece by PERUGINO, for which £3571 8*s.* 7*d.* was paid in May, 1856, to DUKE MELZI of Milan, was not even at that high price unwisely secured, so fine a specimen is this triptych of the master. The 'Good Samaritan' of BASSANO, bought in the same month, was a lawful purchase enough, and the 'Two Apostles' by GIOTTO, at £78 15*s.*, or at the rate of £39 7*s.* 6*d.* per apostle, cannot be called dear. These purchases are succeeded, however, by others that cannot be censured too strongly. £1102 10*s.* for the 'Triumph of Julius Cæsar,' by RUBENS, and £210 for 'The Horrors of War,' by the same master—both valueless specimens—were sums whose outlay is in nowise justifiable. The purchase of the 'Glorification of the Madonna' by Lo SPAGNA—for £651—puts a finishing touch to the mistakes of the year. The next which succeeds it, 1857, is characterized by the addition to our National Gallery of one of the very finest pictures which it contains, 'The Family of Darius,' by PAUL VERONESE; a work so fine, indeed, that even the exorbitant demand of £13,650 was wisely complied with, rather than that so glorious a picture should be lost to a collection so poor as ours. It was an enormous sum; it was too much; but the Eye-witness of the splendour of this work of art has nothing to say against its purchase, which should, however, be promptly succeeded by the sale of the 'Adoration of the Magi,' by the same master, already alluded to in not very laudatory terms.

The 'Portrait of a Lady,' by LUCAS CRANACH, bought in the same year 1857, was (inasmuch as it has something characteristic and good about it) justifiable enough, but the VAN EYCK—that master being, as has been said above, already nobly repre-

sented—need not have been bought. A certain wild sadness which characterises the 'Madonna and Saints,' by PHILIPPINO LIPPI, pleads for the legitimacy of its admission to the collection, and the GHIRLANDAJO Madonna was also an allowable purchase; but the outlay of so large a sum as £3155 4*s.* 6*d.*, on the 'Martyrdom of St. Sebastian,' by ANTONIO POLLAIALO, is not to be excused in any way at all; the only interesting thing about the picture being the enlightenment it affords us, as to the way in which the archers of those days used to string their cross-bows—a wrinkle, however, which at the present moment it was not worth the £3155 4*s.* 6*d.* to the country to acquire.

The Eye-witness goes on to state that, still in the eventful year 1857, a collection of pictures from the LOMBARDI-BALDI palace at Florence entered this country, and that the sum of £7035 departed from it to compensate the Lombardi-Baldis for their loss. That loss they no doubt bore philosophically enough. The whole of their collection consists of red-nosed saints, and diagrams in the manner of those drawn by our boy population on such blank walls as come within their ken. Seven thousand pounds for this!

From the year 1857 to '59 inclusive, the pictures secured to the country are none of them very remarkable. There is an excusable QUENTIN MATSYS, to represent the name; an inexcusable ROMANINO costing £804; a BORGOGNONE costing £430. The 'Portrait of a Lady' by ANTONIJ MORO has character and is good; it was bought of Mr. NIEWENHUYS for £200. There is also among the purchases of this period, a 'Portrait of an Italian Nobleman' by one ALESSANDRO BONVICINO, called Il Moretto, which is remarkable as exhibiting a greater freedom in the attitude than is generally seen in the portraits of the time. It is a good picture, but looks at first sight like a theatrical portrait of Richard the Third. For the rest, the 'St. Francis Glorified,' of PHILIPPINO LIPPI, the 'Dead Christ' of PALMEZZANO, the atrocious 'Altar-piece' of LORENZO COSTA, and the 'Madonna' of MORETTO may be classed among the unnecessary purchases; the 'St. Dominick'

of Zoppo and the 'Madonna' of Basaite among the allowable ones, with which also may go the Treviso, from the Northwick Gallery, and the 'Dead Christ' of Crivelli; which has feeling in spite of its quaintness; and perhaps the 'Madonna' of Cima da Comigliano. There is a good portrait of Masaccio by himself, and a good portrait of a lady, by Zelotti. Still none of these, not even the admissible ones, are remarkable pictures, or such as will evoke any degree of enthusiasm, while there is one of the purchases of this period, the 'Infancy of Jupiter,' by Julius Romano, which cost £920, and which is so vile as to call for an especial censure and reprobation. It is so bad a picture that if one saw it on the blind of a coffee-shop window one would feel no surprise. It is hung in a central position, and is framed and glazed in a manner so magnificent, as only to make its badness more conspicuous. This plan of putting vile pictures in the most costly and magnificent frames and glasses does nothing to mitigate their vileness, and is a system carried so far at the National Gallery as to be highly suggestive of jobbery. The two Ruysdaels, purchased about this time, are not satisfactory examples of the master, and were bought of a certain Count Stolberg for £1187 15*s.* 6*d.*, and £1069 15*s.* 3*d.* respectively.

Sir George Beaumont remarks that he is well acquainted with the pictures in question, and that it seems to him that they want that rich brown tone which should always pervade the works of this master, and without which indeed no landscape is complete.

The Eye-witness, in resuming his evidence, observes that the next purchases made for the National Collection are comprised in what is called the Beaucousin lot, which came into the possession of the country in this present year 1860. Here again the same system appears to be in operation which has been complained of elsewhere. Here again a number of bad pictures have to be bought in order to secure one or two good ones, and three or four that are unobjectionable, but which the collection would do just as well without. Indeed

this is a sorry bargain at £9205 3*s.* 1*d.*, and one looks daily in the Times for an acknowledgement on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchecquer of the receipt of this sum from M. Beaucousin as conscience-money. The gem of this collection for which probably it was purchased is the 'Head of Ariosto' by Titian. Besides these there are some nine or ten allowable pictures, good characteristic portraits, or works which their high finish renders admissible. The disgusting, but highly-wrought Bronzino, placed in a conspicuous position in the principal room, is not included among them. Do these allowable pictures, and the one prize of the Ariosto, justify the Beaucousin purchase? The new Titian of the 'Madonna and other figures,' does not reconcile one to the bargain, and placed between the 'Bacchus and Ariadne,' and the Ariosto, shows to peculiar disadvantage. Was that last-named portrait obtainable by no other means than the purchase of the whole of this lot? Would three or four thousand pounds have bought it, and left us with five or six thousand to our credit, and the rest of the collection off our hands? Eleven of the pictures are by-the-by not to be found, and are possibly at this moment in the cellars of the National Gallery.

Dr. Waghorn remarks—not for the first time—that it is desirable that the different masters of the different periods should be represented in our National Collection.

Witness replies that to carry this to excess, as has been recently done, is to turn that collection into a museum. A specimen of Giotto, one of Taddeo Gaddi, of Van Eyck, of Perugino, would be enough for every chronological purpose; there would be no necessity for spending thousands on endless repetitions of the same things by these men, and their obscure disciples. The public money has been frittered away in timid purchases, when by concentration some half-dozen or even fewer fine pictures might have been acquired to the country. What is there to show for the £78,185. 4*s.* 9*d.* which has been spent in art by the Trustees of the National Gallery since the year 1844? The finest picture acquired

since that time is unquestionably the PAUL VERONESE, which was secured by this very plan of concentration which Witness recommends. A nation like this wants for its national collection the finest pictures in the world, not merely curious pictures, or such as are to be found in many private houses. Is it likely that foreign cupidity could resist such offers as that made in the case of the Paul Veronese so often quoted in the course of this evidence? Allowing for the purchase of that picture; for the Rubens' 'Judgment of Paris;' for the Velasquez 'Boar-Hunt;' 'The Vision of a Knight,' by Raphael; the two Ruysdaels; the fine Perugino; allowing even, though witness was less disposed to do so, for 'The Tribute Money,' by Titian; 'The Adoration of the Magi,' by Paul Veronese, and 'The Adoration of the Shepherds,' by Velasquez; there remains out of that £78,000 devoted to art a sum of £44,000, which surely might have been made to do better work than it has. Some five or six, nay, some three or four really fine pictures would have added more to the glory of our collection, and to the delight of those who visit it, than the addition of whole rooms full of curiosities which people neither understand nor care about. Witness hopes that the jury will perceive that he goes to no excesses in his views, that he commends some of the purchases made by the Trustees while he condemns others; and that he does not affirm that the school of the Pre-Raphaelite painters should not be represented at all, but only that it should not altogether overwhelm us, and that a collection paid for by the public, and got together for the public, should give that public pleasure.

Witness then would beg to submit that the system of buying works of genius by the 'lot' is not a good one. In every case that has come under our notice during this examination, a 'lot' of bad pictures has been purchased for the sake of securing one or two good or doubtful ones, as the case may be. In such cases the pictures to be acquired at so heavy a price should be very unmistakeably desirable ones, or else surely it would be better to let the lot go.

Whether in the recent purchases the gain has exceeded the loss—whether the pure ore has been enough to compensate for the mighty encumbrance of dross which has accompanied and overlaid it—is a great question. We wanted the Paul Veronese, we wanted the portrait of Ariosto, and a few more members of the collection just passed in review; some as tolerable pictures, some as curiosities, some as links in the chain of art-history. The PAUL VERONESE was a single picture acquired at an enormous, an almost unprecedented price. Still that is not a thing to be complained of, as we were not paying for a quantity of things we did not want, but simply giving an immense sum for what we *did* want. Would it not be better to save the money that goes in these timid purchases of a quantity of paltry pictures at paltry prices, and let our fund for art-purchases accumulate till it reaches an amount which may be large enough to tempt some of the proprietors of the really fine works which are lighted now by the dirty windows of the Italian palaces?

The ghost of Sir George Beaumont having discovered at this juncture that he was expected in a distinguished art-circle, where an eminent Medium was at that moment awaiting his rap very impatiently, the inquiry on the subject of the National Collection was adjourned for a week; at the expiration of which time, as some more remarkable particulars are expected to come out, as well as much matter connected with the less statistical and more social aspects (so to speak) of the National Gallery, a full court is anticipated. The readers of this journal may rely on a faithful report of the proceedings.

XXII.

HIS EVIDENCE UPON THE SAME SUBJECT, CONTINUED.

YOUR Eye-witness has to report the remainder of his evidence given on various subjects connected with our National Collection of Pictures, the last inquiry upon this matter having, as the reader will remember, being abruptly terminated by

the necessary absence of one of the Commissioners. The ghost of Sir George Beaumont having been released by the eminent Medium who had summoned it, appeared in Court, and seemed in excellent spirits. It was natural that in taking their seats a little conversation should take place about the nature of the meeting which Sir George had been called on to attend. He remarked in a sprightly manner that it had been a very pleasant séance, and that he and other spirits had given an immense amount of information to the company, and had answered some thousands of questions that had been put to them with regard to the relations and friends of the persons making inquiry, and on many other important subjects.

'And your answers were all satisfactory to them?' asks Doctor Waghorn, cheerily.

'Yes,' the ghost replies, 'eminently so.'

'All accurate, eh?' continues the Doctor.

'No, none of them accurate,' is Sir George's answer; 'not one.'

'And yet everybody was satisfied?' the Doctor asks again, with some surprise.

'Yes, perfectly,' answers the baronet. 'You know they never ARE accurate, somehow; that's the curious part of it: we never can give any information for that reason. There was a sceptical gentleman in company the other evening who seemed very much surprised at that. Another gentleman, not sceptical, and trying to convince the sceptical gentleman, asked me if I had seen his brother who lived in Australia lately. On my replying that I had, he asked whether his brother had a mole on his left eyebrow? I answered in the affirmative. '*There*,' said the believing gentleman. 'And has he such a mole?' asked the sceptical gentleman. 'No,' replied the believing gentleman, and yet the sceptical gentleman was not satisfied.'

Here the subject dropped, and the business of the meeting was resumed. The learned Doctor Waghorn began by asking Witness whether he had any evidence to add to that

given on a former occasion with regard to the pictures in the National Gallery.

The Eye-witness replied that there was one little matter which he should like explained. He found, by reference to his notes, that a certain transaction had taken place which he had a difficulty in understanding. The transaction was succinctly and lucidly described in a Government report as follows :—

'A picture by Palma Vecchio, purchased on the recommendation of Mr. William Woodburn for the National Gallery, at the sale of Monsieur Collot's collection in Paris, in May, 1852, was ceded to the Marquis of Lansdowne, as appears from the following extract from the Minutes of the Trustees, dated the 12th November, 1852 :—"Read a letter from Mr. Hamilton of the 31st July last (1852), communicating to the Trustees the authority of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury for the transfer to the Marquis of Lansdowne of the picture by Palma Vecchio or Giorgione, purchased at Monsieur Collot's sale, on his Lordship paying the amount of the purchase-money into the hands of the Paymaster-General to the public account."'

Professor Waghorn expressed his opinion that the transaction was quite a simple one. A noble lord had cast his eye upon a picture intended for the public, it had caught his fancy, and so it was taken away from the public and the noble lord got it.

Witness begged to ask the learned Doctor whether he did not think that if the picture in question was bought for the public the public ought to have had it, and that for the authorities to make that picture over to one of themselves in that quiet way was not treating the public with proper respect. It seemed to Witness that the authorities in hanging this picture up on Lord Lansdowne's walls had hung themselves up upon the horns of a dilemma. If that picture was a good one the country ought to have had it, while if it was a bad one it ought never to have been purchased. Witness put it to the jury.

The jury was unanimously of opinion that this transaction required explanation.

Professor Waghorn and Sir George Beaumont both requested that this very shocking discussion might terminate where it was. When a noble lord took a fancy to a thing, what could be more charming than to let him have it? The public should be only too glad to have the opportunity of obliging noble lords. Let the evidence be resumed and no further allusion made to this very painful subject. Professor Fudge had expressed himself very strongly on a former occasion on the subject of certain works by the earlier masters of painting, had he any reason to think that his opinions were shared by other persons?

Witness had reason to believe that they were. He had spoken to no one who had not expressed great dissatisfaction with the recent purchases. It was a general feeling. Those purchases had been much ridiculed; and indeed there seemed some ground for the amusement which some of those pictures afforded to the spectator. The public was divided with regard to them. There were some persons who never got beyond the doors of the rooms especially devoted to these early pictures, but stood there timidly looking in, and then would go away without examining them at all. There were others who went through them, as it seemed, from a sense of duty. Referring from picture to catalogue, and from catalogue to picture as quickly as possible, and checking each off as they got over it.

By a juryman.—No, that was not the way to look at pictures, at least not to enjoy them. It was certainly a way of examining a collection which was very common; it was, however, not the right way. (Evidence resumed).

There were other persons who openly objected to these pictures in set terms, and some, as has been said above, who laughed at them. There was some excuse for this last proceeding, the saints in some of the Pre-Raphaelite works being singularly calculated to stimulate a sense of the ridiculous in the spectator. One of these saints was shown

gravely shaking hands with a lion; others are obvious muffs, who when they want to see anything that is going on, such as the glorification of some other saint who lived several centuries afterwards, will neglect the good front places, and crane their necks over from distant parts of the background. There are saints with water on the brain; saints with hair standing on end, erect upon their toes; nay, there are, in one picture in the hall, a toxopholite saint with a bow and arrows; an argumentative and disagreeable saint; a saint who advances his opinions politely and insinuatingly; a stupid saint; and a female saint violently frightened at something she is holding in her hand, and which bears a distant resemblance to a feather, but is equally like (or unlike) the drumstick of a fowl. All the saints are in one picture, by the same token that this composition is in the school of Andrea del Castagno, of whom we are told in the catalogue that he was called 'The Infamous,' though whether from the infamy of his art or of his private career does not come out. Being quite sure of his professional infamy, however, we will suppose that to be the subject of allusion, and leave his moral career alone. But what a purchase was this! a picture not even by 'The Infamous' himself, but in the school of his infamy. We are not only to buy the works of unknown (and infamous) masters, but even those of their more unknown (and more infamous) disciples!

Dr. Waghorn was of opinion that too much was being said about the picture. It only occupied a position in the hall.

That hall, Witness continued, was certainly the best place for such works. It was not adorned with an exhilarating collection of gems. There was an Apostle of awful size, and very horrible to contemplate, who presided over one of the doorways, and was the handiwork of one Pordenone (another of those illustrious masters whom Witness had never had the advantage of hearing about before).

Professor Waghorn begged to remind Professor Fudge that the work in question was a gift and not a purchase. It was the gift of Cavaliere Vallati.

Witness begged the cavaliere's pardon. It was very liberal of that nobleman. Witness was glad to find that on a subsequent occasion, in 1859, a deal had been effected with the cavaliere by which he became possessed of £303 sterling. How was it the liberal donor of the invaluable Pordenone had been induced to accept that sum?

Professor Waghorn submitted that this question was irregular. There was no connection between the two transactions —how could there be?

A juryman remarked that there could be, in this way. 'This 'ere cavaleer might want to come round the country in order to make 'em buy some of his pictures, or what not?'

Professor Waghorn begged he might not hear any such insinuations, and that the evidence of Professor Fudge might be resumed.

While on the subject of gifts and that of bequests, which naturally suggested itself at the same time, Witness thought that the terribly cynical but true proverb, which suggested the impropriety of examining the dental arrangements of eleemosynary horses, was applicable sometimes to pictures. Was it judicious to accept such gift pictures as some of those that adorned the walls of the National Gallery? How liberal people had been with the works of Benjamin West, R.A., for instance—

Sir G. Beaumont begged to observe that he had himself presented the country with a picture by that artist.

Dr. Waghorn remarked that few men had ever been more deeply imbued with a feeling for the works of the masters, and more reverently a student of those works (bringing no audacious novelties of his own into play) than Mr. West, P.R.A.

Witness quite agreed with Dr. Waghorn on that subject. He submitted, however, that perhaps the pictures of the deceased President would have been more interesting if he *had* put something more of his own into them. Be that as it might, witness had meant no allusion to the gift of Sir George Beaumont, which was the best specimen of the artist in the collection, but to subsequent donations of

Andrea del Sarto ? The jury
it, did they ? What did they thi
Witness found the n
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been left to him by some previous Ollney, or did he buy them out of his pay, or did he in the sack of some foreign town receive them as his portion, and leave them out of spite to the country which assigned them to him? Yet the bequests of Ollney are more cheery than that of Forbes, Esq., who made over to us just one gem, an 'Allegory' by Angelica Kauffman, and there ended.

Dr. Waghorn thought Witness was carrying his views to an excess. Witness appeared to him to like nothing.

Sir George Beaumont gave it as his opinion that Angelica Kauffman was a great and gifted creature, and that if there was one thing in which she excelled more remarkably than another, it was allegory; in which invigorating phase of Fine Art she was indeed at home.

Witness bowed to the opinion of the accomplished ghost who had last spoken. He, however, must protest against the remark which had fallen just now from the lips of the learned Doctor Waghorn. He (Witness) appealed to the jury whether he had not spoken in terms of high admiration of many works hanging on the walls of the National Gallery. He certainly had been compelled to speak much more in the language of censure than of praise, but he had, if the jury remembered, at a former examination, begun by stating that there was an intolerable deal of rubbish in our collection, and his evidence had only borne that assertion out. There was one donation to the country—in addition to that of Mr. Vernon, which not being in the National Gallery could not claim any part of their consideration during the present investigation—there was one gift of which he could not speak in terms too high. It consisted of two magnificent pictures, one of 'Sunrise by the Sea-shore,' and the other of 'The Building of Carthage.' They were the work and the bequest of Turner, and were left in a kind of hopeless attempt to conquer the prejudice which exists in the majority of minds in favour of the old painters, and that insane belief in their universal superiority to the new; a belief which, if it was not shaken by these very pictures, must be indeed deeply

rooted. Let any person with the use of his eyes compare these pictures with the Claudes among which they were placed, and Witness had no fear for the result.

Doctor Waghorn and Sir George Beaumont both attempting to speak at once, the preference was naturally given, the superiority of mind over matter being an established thing, to the accomplished ghost; who proceeded to say that he had now lived, or rather he had died, to see the day when impiousness, audacity, and free-thinking had attained their climax. He had heard the gentleman to whose evidence the jury had been listening, and who he begged to say was a very young gentleman to give his opinions in the confident manner in which he enunciated them; he had heard that young gentleman speak in a manner which would have made his flesh, if he had had any, creep; he had heard names which he had been accustomed to mention—ay, and to hear mentioned—with hushed breath, spoken lightly, flippantly, disparagingly, and the owners of those names criticised as if they were mere ordinary mortals. Here was a young man coming forward unshaved, and with no neckcloth to speak of. Professor Waghorn begged the accomplished ghost to take notice that the majority of the jury was characterised by the same peculiarities.

Sir George Beaumont begged pardon of the jury, he had lived in days when men shaved and wore stocks; that was a period also when they believed things that were told them on authority, and did not presume to lift up their voices to give expression to private opinion. Had veneration ceased to exist for anything? Had reverence and razors gone out together? He (the accomplished ghost) had heard the names of the Carracci, and of Guido, spoken of in disparaging terms; he had heard it assumed that Raphael himself could sometimes paint a bad picture, and now he was to hear the glories of Claude, Claude the idol of his youth, the worship of his manhood, the stay of his declining years, spoken of as likely to suffer by comparison with certain works by the late Mr. Turner, a clever gentleman whom he had had the

pleasure of knowing, but whom he could not hear spoken of in the same breath with a master like Claude Lorraine. Did Witness remember that Mr. Turner was a modern artist and Claude an old master, and was not that enough?

Dr. Waghorn was heard to murmur that it was enough.

The Eye-witness said, on the other hand, that it was not enough. He was quite of the opinion that there were masters of the older time who excelled masters of the new time; but there were also some masters of this day whose performances threw into the shade those of some masters of the day for which the accomplished gentleman who had just spoken had expressed such reverence. The modern artists had at any rate the power of interesting us more than the ancient.

Professor Waghorn wished to know what Witness meant? Did he conceive that people were *not* interested in the works which had been the subject of the present examination? Had Witness observed any symptoms of indifference among the visitors to the works in the old masters' gallery?

The Eye-witness had witnessed some very remarkable symptoms among those visitors. He had noticed that the most essentially modern picture in the collection was that most crowded about. It was a small picture, but it certainly was the great favourite.

Dr. Waghorn begged to inquire what that picture was?

Witness replied that it was the work of one Dyckmans, that it represented a blind beggar and his child, and was bequeathed to the country by, of all people in the world, the late Miss Jane Clarke, a milliner in Regent Street, and the inventor of the prettiest form of bonnet that ever was perched upon the female head since heads and bonnets existed. Witness did not like that picture, but he was certainly of opinion that the public did, and that a perceptible difference was observable in the demeanour of those who turned from the contemplation of, say the Allegory of Angelica Kauffman, to a consideration of this picture. They lost for a *time* that jaded and listless appearance which had cha-

racterised them while engaged in the study of the old masters.

Dr. Waghorn concluded, from the nature of the Witness's remarks, that at any rate he did not consider the collection which had been presented to the nation by Robert Vernon, Esq., was an inconsiderable or trifling gift.

Witness replied that indeed he did not. He wished, however, to ask a question with regard to those pictures. He wished to know whether a commission had not been appointed to decide whether it was desirable to remove those pictures to South Kensington, or to keep them as parts of the national collection.

Professor Waghorn believed that such a commission had been appointed.

Witness begged next to inquire what was the result of the inquiries of that commission, and what the conclusion arrived at by them?

Professor Waghorn believed that the conclusion arrived at was that the pictures in question should *not* be removed to Kensington.

Witness.—And yet that removal was effected: could the learned Doctor explain that circumstance?

The learned Doctor was not in a position to explain it. Possibly it had appeared to higher authorities than that commission, or than *any* commission could be composed of, that such a removal would be an agreeable portion of a plan in which those high authorities were interested. If so, the removal of those pictures was one of the most gratifying things that had ever come under his notice, and should be so to the country generally.

A juryman did not see, under those circumstances, the good of having a commission at all.

Another juryman remarked that he didn't know as commissions ever *was* much good. This observation being, however, considered to be irregular, and to have no connection with the matter in hand.

Witness went on to say that he considered such neglect on

the part of Government of the conclusions arrived at by a commission of the Government's own appointing, was most extraordinary, and that it required explanation. Witness was of opinion that if any picture was to be removed to a distance from the centre of the town, the works of the old masters should have been selected, as the modern pictures would certainly have afforded more delight to the public, and consequently should be within easy reach.

Dr. Waghorn considered that the public was not justified in expecting to have what it likes, but rather what is thought good for it. If the public liked modern art better than ancient, which the learned Doctor could hardly believe possible, but if it did he could only say that it deserved,—deserved——

Witness.—To be confined for a day in the National Gallery, perhaps?

The Doctor begged that he might not be interrupted; he was about to say that the public deserved no consideration at the hands of Government. The learned Doctor then went on to say that he thought it was time for the present inquiry to draw to a close; was his accomplished colleague (Sir G. Beaumont) of the same opinion?

Sir G. Beaumont *was* of the same opinion. He had been much shocked and outraged by the things he had heard in that court, and it would be a relief to him to be released from so painful an ordeal. In addition to this, the accomplished ghost felt that the evening was drawing on, and that he would be wanted elsewhere as soon as—as—in short, as soon as it was dark enough.

Dr. Waghorn requested the Eye-witness to bring his evidence to an immediate close, and in doing so to state exactly what the object of that evidence was, and what it was that he was endeavouring to establish by the very revolutionary and unpleasant sentiments to which he had given utterance in that court.

The Eye-witness began by saying that he was about him*self* to suggest the termination of this inquiry, as he had said

nearly all he wished to say on the important subject which that inquiry had been organised to investigate. In conclusion he begged to add that the whole intention and purpose of the evidence he had given was, he had hoped, made sufficiently clear by the nature *of* that evidence. He had gone through —not indeed completely, for that would have occupied more time than was necessary,—but he believed completely enough for the present purpose, the pictures of which our National Collection was composed, and more especially those works which had been recently added to it. He had endeavoured to show—with what success it was for the jury to decide—that many of those purchases had been characterised by a mingled timidity and rashness which would sometimes strangely enough go together, but always in most unhappy union. He had shown them that pictures had been purchased in lots at prices which forbade the possibility of their being fit works for the National Gallery of England, and that the money spent thus in small sums might, by being allowed to accumulate, have reached an amount such as might have tempted the possessors of some one or two fine pictures to part with them; and Witness contended that to acquire one or two such works was better than to gain any number of second or third rate pictures, such as might indeed be endured in private collections, but not in the national collection of this great and prosperous country. He had (giving a larger margin than his own judgment entirely coincided with) granted that out of the £78,185, spent since the year 1844, the following purchases were justifiable, viz.:—The 'Judgment of Paris,' at £4000,—'The Boar-Hunt,' at £2200,—'The Vision of a Knight,' at £1050,—'The Tribute Money,' at £2604 (against this the E. W. protests, but it is allowed, as is the case with 'The Adoration of the Magi,' and the two Ruysdaels, because of the public consent),—'The Adoration of the Magi,' at £1977,—the Ruysdaels at, respectively, £1187, and £1069,—the Perugino at £3571,—the 'Adoration of the Shepherds' of VELASQUEZ, at £2050, and the 'Darius' of Paul Veronese, at £13,650. These pictures were

not purchased in lots, and together made up a sum of £33,358, leaving a balance of upwards of £40,000, which Witness contended had been misapplied. Two things more the Witness had endeavoured to prove: first, that it was not right when a picture was purchased for the country that it should be made over to a noble lord, who took a fancy to it; and, secondly, that it was absurd to appoint a commission to decide on the proper position for the Vernon Gallery, and then not to abide by the conclusion arrived at by that commission. Witness had now one more inquiry to make, and he had done. He had been told that the really fine works by old masters, which were to be found in various public and private collections on the Continent, were not to be bought for money; he wished to know if it was the opinion of the jury that if good pictures by the old masters were not to be had, the only thing to do was to buy bad or indifferent ones; and he wished also to know whether it would not be better to spend the public money on good modern pictures, both English and foreign, than on bad ancient ones purchased merely because they were ancient?

By Sir George Beaumont:—Yes, Witness was of opinion that there actually were some pictures by the modern artists which were superior to some pictures by the old. Witness had that very morning in walking down St. James' Street seen a pair of photographs from two pictures by a living French painter, which gave him greater pleasure than nine tenths of the works of the old masters. They were pictures that reached the mind, and not the eye only. The first represents a scene in the Colosseum at Rome in the days when it was used for the vile purpose for which it was built. A group of doomed gladiators approach the seat of the Emperor, which is raised above them, and salute him on their road to death. The grace and magnificence of this group, marvellously fine as it is; the strange truth of the scene, which is put before one with inconceivable reality and force; these qualities are nothing to the mind that is in the picture. The athletes are presented by a courtier-like

and flippant master of the revels, and the royal salute rises to the imperial throne, 'The men about to die salute thee, great Cæsar.' Words that fall like idle sounds on the ear of him to whom they are addressed. The fat and blasé wretch is not even looking at the men as they approach him. These preliminary forms only bore him; let them come to bloodshed, that may rouse him perhaps. This fat emperor, seated on his high throne, is something removed from his court, he is lonely and cursed in his look, and is more an object of pity than the men below, who are 'butchered to make a Roman holiday,' and how much more than those already slain, whose bodies lie about the arena! Such is the first picture. It shows the Sin; the second—representing the assassination of Julius Cæsar—the Punishment. An unpromising subject enough it might be supposed; but what are sterile subjects in the hands of unthinking and conventional men became invested with novelty and interest by the touch of genius. The artist has in this great work abandoned himself to a guide that leads men on to glory with sure and unerring steps; he has abased himself before the throne of TRUTH, and bound himself by her eternal laws. What the Senate was in the time of Cæsar, the Senate is now, and a senator in a toga or a paletot is still a man. That Senate-house in which the emperor is murdered has its seats encumbered with papers as they would be in the Luxembourg. One man has left a cloak in the place where he was sitting, and one has fallen asleep so heavily that the assassination itself has not awakened him. The body of the emperor lies decently covered in the front of the picture, and the throne on which he was seated is wrested from its place. Meanwhile the conspirators are departing in a little group huddled together at the back of the picture, and some of the hindmost of them turn as they depart TO LOOK ON WHAT THEY HAVE DONE.

Witness begged to apologise for the length of speech into which the remembrance of these pictures had drawn him. Nothing he could say was strong enough to express what he

felt about them. He would now put it to the jury whether it was not better, till we could get first-rate pictures by the old masters, to buy such glorious specimens as these of the new, and whether any triumph of Julius Cæsar that Mantegna could commemorate was such a triumph as this of which he had spoken?

Professor Waghorn said in few words that the jury had heard what Professor Fudge had put forward in the course of his evidence. He (the learned Doctor) was of opinion that the views of Witness were extreme and exaggerated. He had consulted with his colleague on the bench (the donor of some of the most beautiful works in the National Collection), who was of the same opinion as himself. He (the learned Doctor) was determined to stand by those time-honoured names which had come down to them from former ages, adorned with the high laudations which the voices of each succeeding generation had accumulated over them. The learned Doctor had, however, no wish to influence the minds of the jury. Their business was to form their own verdict upon what they had heard—upon the evidence of Professor Fudge, accompanied by such remarks as he (the learned Doctor) and the accomplished ghost with whom he had the honour of sharing that bench, had from time to time delivered as comments upon the statements of the Eye-witness.

The jury, without retiring, announced that they were prepared with their verdict, which was to the following effect:—That they considered that an undue number of works by those early masters who were called Pre-Raphaelite had been purchased by the Trustees of the National Gallery:—that the practice of buying works, irrespective of their merits, merely to represent a certain name, was highly objectionable, as was the system of purchasing pictures in a 'lot,' good and bad together:—that it had appeared that since 1844 a sum of money of upwards of £40,000 had been misapplied out of £78,000 spent:—that the disregard shown to the decision of the commission appointed to determine on the removal or non-removal of the Vernon pictures, was dis-

respectful and inexplicable:—that the handing over to a noble lord of a picture purchased for the country, on consideration of the payment of the original purchase-money by that noble lord, was a transaction requiring explanation:—and, finally, that it was most desirable that in the existing difficulty of procuring fine works by the old masters, arrangements should be made that would render possible the purchase of the best works of modern artists, both English and foreign for the National Collection.

Dr. Waghorn begged to inform the jury that the verdict which they had arrived at—and with which he entirely disagreed—should be forwarded to the proper quarter; that it would be received there, would be recorded *as* their verdict, that all the necessary formalities in connexion with it would be gone through, and that NO RESULT WHATEVER would take place in consequence of it. He hoped everybody was satisfied, and he begged to dissolve the commission.

The jury, the component members of which appeared to be perfectly contented with the fact that they had been allowed to express an opinion, now departed, and the ghost of Sir George Beaumont, which had been for some time impatiently *rapping* the table, in evident annoyance at being detained so long, disappeared with wonderful celerity. It is understood that Dr. Waghorn at once betook himself to the National Gallery, where he was found some time afterwards, contemplating 'The Infancy of Jupiter,' by Julio Romano, with evident symptoms of satisfaction.

To this report of the official evidence which the Eye-witness *ought* to have given, on the occasion of the inquiry which *ought* to have been held on the subject of the judiciousness of certain recent purchases made by the Trustees of the National Gallery—to this, he begs to add one or two remarks upon less important matters, and upon the more social aspects of this great, but dismal exhibition. The Eye-witness remarked that the visitors to the National Gallery were jaded and listless to a pitiable extent. That there

were few persons who appeared to enjoy the pictures. The greater portion of the visitors walked slowly and solemnly round; those who were accompanied by friends, seldom speaking to them. In fact they discharged their conscience of a visit to the National Gallery, and went away again. The E. W. remarked a glee and briskness about the walk and general appearance of the visitors who were going away, which was not observable in those who were entering.

Under these circumstances it may not irrationally be asked, why the people go to an exhibition which they do not particularly enjoy when they get there. The answer to this question involves a very subtle principle, which, as far as the writer knows, has never been the subject of examination by any of our scientific and philosophical savans. The principle which your Eye-witness wishes to establish is this: that there is an irresistible force of attraction about open doors which draws human beings through them. There are invisible currents that set towards these places, and which on certain occasions become irrisistibly strong. The occasions chiefly alluded to are those when some great public holiday dawns upon us, as Easter-Monday, Whit-Monday, or Good-Friday. At those times the power of suction possessed by these open doors is such, that few people are able to resist them. The extraordinary distances too, to which the power of these currents extend, is very remarkable. On such festive days as have been mentioned above, it is nothing for a respectable family to be dragged, children, babies, and all, from distances even as remote as Hoxton or Camberwell; and with scarce time to snatch a few provisions together, to victual them by the way, they are whirled along on this tide to their ruin, madly grasping as they pass at such unsubstantial objects as bottles of ginger-beer, oranges, and the like, with which their dread progress is only for a moment ineffectually retarded, their last snatch, when at the very mouth of the aperture which is yawning to receive them, being generally made at an institution called a Catalogue,

with which they hope to mitigate their torments, but which is generally found to add to them considerably.

There is no other principle than this of the suctional powers of doorways, that can at all account for the presence of so many people, who are evidently exquisitely wretched, in the hall of the National Gallery. Why, but that he has lit upon one of those resistless currents, should that weary old labourer, in a white smock frock, have got into those rooms on a bright Whit-Monday? The force of the tide, in his case, must have extended at least to Kingston or Watford. Why again that charwoman and her little girl; the child asking who was St. Sebastian, and the charwoman replying that she doesn't know? Why the two horse-soldiers, a young private and an old non-commissioned officer, who walk round the rooms, the young man always a few paces behind his senior, and always looking at the pictures over the other's head, but not saying anything? Neither of these men—who, as all horse-soldiers are—are perfectly satisfactory—speaks to the other, or appears to be interested by anything that he passes. Why did they come? Why did the young man with the open mouth, who has sat upon one chair in the Large Room all the time that your Eye-witness was making his notes—why did that young man come? He is very miserable, and would be happier elsewhere. Why did the polite man come, whose life was rendered wretched because he was always discovering, when he tried to look at a picture, that he was standing in front of some one, and had to skip out of the way incessantly on this account? Why was that poor little girl brought here? she changes the leg she is standing on continually, and leans upon railings, and sits upon edges of chairs, and looks so weary; and when they ask her 'Are you tired, dear?' says resignedly, 'A little.' The sight of that child's torments reminded the Eye-witness of some that he had himself gone through in early years, in galleries full of pictures by the old masters.

There is little going on in the way of conversation in

those rooms; and what there is is seldom about the pictures. One conversation which the Eye-witness listened to, seemed from the frequent allusion to a 'quarter of a pound of beef-suet' which occurred in its course, to be rather on matters connected with cookery than art. But the sound most commonly heard in those halls was the echoing and re-echoing of weary and protracted yawns; those yawns more indicative of hopeless exhaustion than any other, which end in three or four supplementary brays of weariness when the yawn is over. There were indeed, on the occasion of the last visit of your Eye-witness to the National Gallery, two persons present whose conversation, or rather that of one of them, for the other rarely spoke, was upon subjects connected with the place. Of these two individuals, one, who was considerably older than his companion, seemed to have brought his young friend to the National Gallery to torment him. They were both in a class of life in which much art-education was not to be expected; but the younger man was evidently especially in the dark in such matters, and was ensnared into mistakes, and lured on to ruin by his senior, in a cruel and inhuman manner. The tormentor—the greasiness of whose coat and cap was not to be accounted for by any trade that human beings follow—would halt before a picture, and with a malicious grin would inquire of his young friend what it appeared to him to represent. As it evidently represented nothing to the young friend, the young friend said nothing.

'Do you *see* the pictur?' asks the greasy man.

'Yes,' replies the other, sulkily.

'Well, what do you see when you look at it?' It is a Dutch picture of a girl scraping parsnips, with a child by her side watching her. 'What do you see when you look at it?'

No answer.

'Is it a mermaid standing on her head and playing on the pianner with her tail?' asks the tormentor, ironically.

No answer.

'Is it a line-of-battle ship in action, with the coast of France in the distance?' the friend continues.

The young man stares stolidly before him, but returns no response; and he of the greasy coat lapses from sarcasm into open censure.

'Now what's the use,' says the greasy man, 'of your coming here if you won't use your mind? What's the use,' he continues, looking round on the company who are assembled about him, as they always are round anybody who will hold forth—'what's the good of a young man coming here if he doesn't understand what he sees? This 'ere, George, is a pictur of a old woman mending a pen for the little boy to write his copy with; and so you might have seen, George, if you had used your imagination with which nature has supplied you.'

XXIII.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO A VERY STRANGE AND UNKNOWN INSTITUTION CALLED A 'FRIENDLY LEAD,' WITH SOME MARVELLOUS REVELATIONS AS TO THE NATURE OF THE SAME.

It is ten to one—*ten* to one?—it is ten thousand to one, that the reader has never heard of such a thing as a Friendly Lead. It is still more improbable that he has ever been present at one.

Your Eye-witness is prepared to acknowledge that at a period of time as recent as the close of the year 1859, he himself was in profound ignorance of the existence of this institution, concerning which he has since been much enlightened. His attention has been directed to the subject of Friendly Leads, and he has gone into that subject as completely as it lay in his power to do. The results of his researches have been condensed into the form of this report, in which it is his design to reveal certain particulars from a consideration of which it is hoped that the reader will rise, having learnt something which he did not know before.

Some weeks since a gentleman, whose position as the owner of a factory in the neighbourhood of Bethnal-green

had made him acquainted with certain customs obtaining among those in his employ—this gentleman, a stranger to your Eye-witness, but kindly anxious to direct his attention to a condition of affairs well worthy of notice, forwarded to him a card, of which an exact copy is subjoined :—

A Friend-in-Need is a Friend-in-Deed.

A FRIENDLY LEAD,

Will take place on Saturday, January 28th, at Mr Blake's White Horse, Hare Street, Bethnal Green, for the benefit of Mr. C. Norton, whose Daughter destroyed herself last Friday, and being in a poor position himself, your aid will greatly oblige...Tickets 1d. each.

C. Hall, Sen. Chairman. J. Spencer, Deputy.

Now a card such as this is just the kind of document which a man—on coming in contact with it for the first time—would read through twice or thrice, would turn round and round with his finger and thumb, would examine the back of, would endeavour to split with his nail, would scratch his chin with, looking absently out of window the while, would read through once more, and finally would so far favour with his confidence as to determine to look into the matter to which it made allusion.

It is the idea of your Eye-witness—who did every one of the things above described—it is his idea, in presenting the results of this final determination to the readers of these words, to ask them (respectfully) to accompany him in his expedition. It is his wish to present certain scenes, and observations on those scenes, to those who read this paper, calling their attention to this or that circumstance as he would do were they in the room with him, and giving them an insight into Bethnal-green life without asking them to stir from their own comfortable drawing-rooms.

Your Eye-witness will pass over certain preliminary matters connected with his undertaking very briefly, merely stating that he made a voyage of discovery on the day preceding that appointed for the Friendly Lead in order to reconnoitre the neighbourhood, and ascertain exactly where he

was going. Well, it was a shy neighbourhood, there was no denying it. A nasty neighbourhood to look at, whatever it might be to inhabit. In lurking about it, and making one or two inquiries relative to Friendly Leads in general, and to that contemplated at the White Horse on Saturday evening in particular, your Servant learnt and observed certain things which gave him pause. He heard vague rumours that these ceremonials were occasionally got up by thieves—he was asked with some alarm 'if he meant to attend *himself;* well, at any rate, he didn't mean to go' (your E. W. is habitually seedy in his attire) 'dressed as well as he was then? They were a rough lot that he intended going amongst,' &c. &c. Your Eye-witness having by these and the like remarks been induced to reflect whether his intention of attending the Friendly Lead was on the whole a prudent one, and finding that the conclusion which he arrived at that it was a most *im*prudent one furnished the strongest incentive he had yet felt to go—the E. W. tore himself away from a warm fire, a comfortable provision of wine and dessert, and many other attractive lures, and set off alone on the evening of the 28th of January for Bethnal Green, for Hare Street, for the White Horse, for the Friendly Lead.

If your Eye-witness were brought for a few minutes in contact with a certain branch of our metropolitical government called the Lighting and Paving, he would reverently inquire what was the precise nature of the motives which induced it (the Lighting and Paving) to keep all the West-End and well-regulated neighbourhoods in a perfect blaze of illumination, and to leave in Stygian darkness all those parts of our metropolis, which are known to be haunted by disreputable characters, and which are unmistakeably the head-quarters of pickpockets and other marauders. It is invariably the case that in those regions where danger is to be apprehended the lights are dimmest and farthest apart, while in a thoroughfare like Portland Place, you could see to read this article standing between two gas-lamps at equal distances.

A discovery of the exact principle on which the Lighting

and Paving acts in this matter would be the more interesting, because it is evidently the same which influences the authorities connected with the ordering of our police arrangements. The policeman and the gas-lamp go together, and our constables are ever to be found rallying round each other in situations where there is plenty of light and life, while in the cut-throat neighbourhoods about Bermondsey and Spitalfields you shall look for them in vain.

These audacious sentiments asserted themselves very strongly in the breast of your Servant, as leaving behind him the crowded thoroughfare of Bishopsgate Street Without, he penetrated more and more into the remote intricacies of the vicinage of Bethnal-green. The farther he advanced the fainter was the illumination, till at last he actually stopped and looked about some time before he could persuade himself that there were any lamps at all, and that the feeble light which existed was more than came from the few and melancholy shops which were thinly scattered, here and there, on either side of the street.

But if a dark street is a gloomy and depressing thing, what is a dark public-house? Whatever is dismal let not our taverns be so. Accustomed to think of a gin-palace as a blazing temple which sheds a brilliant gleam across the street, and half-way up and down it too, it is a terrible thing to have to do with a public which makes so little mark that it is quite difficult to find, and which when found looks black, and secret, and forbidding.

It must be acknowledged that when your Eye-witness arrived at the door of the house of entertainment at which the Friendly Lead was to come off, the aspect of affairs was not inviting. Though there was little light emitted into the street by the tavern in question, the same complaint could not be made in the matter of noise. Nor were the sounds which emanated from the White Horse altogether of an amiable kind; the Friendly Lead might be going on upstairs, but it seemed not at all unlikely to lead to hostilities below. There was no time however to be lost; your Servant was anxious

to be present at the Lead from its commencement, and there was nothing for it but (his usual resource when in difficulties) a plunge.

After loitering a short time about the bar, and noticing one or two general tendencies of the company assembled, such as a disposition on the part of each member of the same to a prevailing egotism, and contempt of the experiences of others, and to a pursuance of his, or her, narrative whether listened to or not, and in spite of, and above all answers, objections, episodical anecdotes, or other occasional illustrations made by the party or parties addressed; after a slight and cursory chat with the pot-boy to get his mind in cue for good society, your Eye-witness mounted a wooden staircase which led to the regions above, and passing through an open door found himself in a large upper apartment with a very fair sprinkling of persons of both sexes seated round it, and with a very fair allowance of tobacco-smoke correcting any such undue freshness and clearness of the atmospheric air as might otherwise have been considered objectionable.

And now the reader shall be kept no longer in suspense, but shall be enlightened at once as to what a Friendly Lead really is, how it is conducted, the good that results from it, and the chief defects connected with its carrying out. Your Eye-witness gained all this information from a gentleman who was sitting at a table close to the door of the room, with two plates before him, one upon the top of the other. When anybody entering the apartment put a penny or twopence into the upper plate, this gentleman who appeared to be a sort of treasurer, slid the sum into the under receptacle—a soup plate—and covered it up again as before. The treasurer's discourse was explanatory and elegant in its phraseology. It was of this sort.

'You see, sir, a Friendly Lead is this here; when a poor man —being a factory worker, a jyner, a clockmaker, or what not —which this 'ere man himself is in the alarum business—his daughter being in the factory works at Gimp and Twister's round the corner—well, sir, this poor man, not being this one

particklarly, but as it might be you or me, being a factory man, a clockmaker or what not, say he falls into distress, gets behind, 'as a doctor's bill to pay, 'as to bury a child, leastways 'as some hextra payment to come down with which he did not look for—what is he, being a pore man, to do? Well, sir, he comes to some friend as knows him as it might be you or me, and says, 'Simmons,' he says, 'here's a bundle of tickets,' he says, 'for a Lead, will you take a few and see if you can work 'em off?'—well, I takes some, you takes some, and so does others of his friends, and we agin works 'em among *our* friends (promulging and making it known while we does so that this pore man is in exiguency and want), and so these makes it known agin to *their* friends till at last a tidy lot is sold, being at a penny, tuppence, or what not. Very well; he comes next to this 'ouse, 'spectable 'ouse, or it might be any other, and he says to the landlord, 'Mr. Blake,' he says—as it might be you or me—'I want your room for this night or that night, for a Lead amongst friends and in a friendly style, as it might be here or there or anywheres.' Then they meets together, and each man as he comes in puts in his penny or twopence, or what not, into the plate. Well, sir, the hobject of all this 'ere, is to hease him—being but a pore man, a factory worker, a clockmaker or what not—to hease him a little; and first one comes in and then another, and sometimes he makes a pretty good thing of it and sometimes not so much; and then being met together, perhaps some gentleman as it might be you, or any one present, he obliges the society with a song; and first one sings, or it may be another, anybody, in short, who is willing to oblige; and so the hevening passes till it gets to be twelve o'clock, and the company being about to go, the party who receives the money, as it might be myself this night, he says a few words thanking 'em for their pincuriary asistance, or what not, and so the money being reckoned up, is handed over to the man as the Lead is for, as it might be you or me, and then we breaks up for the night, and perhaps one will stop a little, and another will stop a little, and take his three-

pennorth at the bar, depending on when it is; but this 'ere being Saturday night; they will go the sooner, the 'ouse being closed at twelve.'

'And why is it called a "Lead?"' asked your Eye-witness.

'Well sir, don't you see that this pore man *being* but a pore man—a factory-worker, a clockmaker or what not—this is got up for to hease him,' was the triumphant reply.

'Yes, I see that,' continued the Eye-witness, 'but what I want explained, is why the word "Lead" should be applied. I don't see what it means.'

'Why just you look 'ere sir,' says the treasurer, leaning over the table and gesticulating demonstratively with his hands, smiling the while in patient pity at the obtuseness of your Servant—'just look 'ere. It means what I have just been explaining. Here is a poor man, being a factory worker, a clockmaker or what not, he comes to one of his friends, as it might be you or me.—'

At this point your witness became desperate, and perceiving that the whole dialogue was going to be repeated, professed that he perceived now exactly how it was, and that the clearness with which he saw the just application of the word 'Lead,' to a convivial meeting for a charitable purpose, rendered further explanation needless.

Thrown back upon his own resources for the means of discovering the derivation of this word 'Lead,' your Eye-witness could only conclude that it derived its origin from the fact that those who get the thing up, take the *lead* in helping the indigent person, or *lead* the way in the matter of his relief. This seems the only way of explaining the application of the term. A Friendly Lead is an expedient resorted to by those persons who falling into some sudden pecuniary difficulty and embarrassment, belong to no benefit club, and so, are under the necessity of having recourse to the public—their own public—for help in their necessity.

The case to which this mode of relief was applied on the occasion of your Eye-witness's visit to the White

Horse Tavern, was a peculiarly distressing one. It was that of a young girl, sixteen or seventeen years old, who had committed suicide in a paroxysm of jealousy. It seems that she and a lad, of about her own age only, had been brought up almost always together, had been playmates and constant associates. An attachment had sprung up between them; and it was simply, as your Eye-witness was informed, because she had seen this youngster in conversation with some other girl, that she determined to destroy herself, a resolution which she carried out by swallowing a quantity of a certain deadly acid used by her father in his trade. This case will doubtless remind the reader of one recently reported in the daily papers, in which a girl destroyed herself by jumping down the shaft of a disused mine for the same cause; having merely seen her lover talking to a woman of whom she felt jealous. It is impossible to say whether the one tragedy, or rather the account of it, which appeared in the newspapers, may have had some share in producing the other; it is far from impossible. One thing is quite certain, that such a suicide is often attributable to the thought of the effect it will produce on him whose misconduct, real or supposed, has led to it—'he will hear of it, it will make him miserable—he will know at last how fond I was of him,'—these are the thoughts which haunt the wretched girl's mind as she walks along the path, overgrown with brambles, which leads to the mouth of the deserted pit; or as she mounts upon a chair to take the bottle of 'father's acid,' which is labelled POISON, from the cupboard shelf.

We hardly know what persons of this class suffer, and how *helpless* they are under a great affliction. What do they know of the healing effects of time? They see no way out of the difficulty. They are miserable now, and that they will always be so is their present conviction. The balance is upset, they are puzzled, the small domain of thought, a narrow region with them, is rent by this moral earthquake. 'There is one remedy for all,' says the bad voice within—and they take it.

The father of the unhappy girl who had thus broken into

the house of life, was present at this 'Lead,' and, seated at a table not far from the post occupied by your Eye-witness, betrayed an interest of no common order in the contents of the soup-plate in which the contributions of the visitors were collected. This personage was quite the hero of the evening. There is no one at all well acquainted with the lower classes of our countrymen who has not observed how their importance among their circle of acquaintance is increased by a death. They regard their affliction with a sense of proprietorship, and look upon it as highly creditable to the family generally. There is in this class some small entertainment of this feeling when *any* misfortune gives them a temporary prominence, but still a death is the great card of all. What a property a corpse is to them; and a funeral, what a glory!

Such boy-and-girl attachments as this which had ended so terribly are extremely common among these factory workers and others of the same order. Indeed, it was curious to observe the large number of young boys who were present on the occasion of this 'Lead,' and to notice the prominent part taken by these mere children, as well as the readiness of their seniors to give way to them. Is not this a characteristic of our day? The old men seem almost afraid of the youngsters, who awe and surprise them into submission by their blasé, knowing airs. These little men and their sweethearts were to be seen in all parts of the room, and were smoking their pipes, and drinking their beer with great gravity and importance; but such early and precocious beginnings are not favourable to the structural development of these boys, and they so rarely attain to any size that it seems as if nature had determined to punish them for their presumption, and had decreed that since these small creatures had offended her by pretending that they were grown up, they should be made to take the consequences, and should find that at least in the one respect of having 'done growing,' they should be men to their hearts' content.

Nor is this precocity of the youth of both sexes in this

peculiar locality and grade of life at all surprising to those who have observed (as your Eye-witness has chanced to do) the early introduction of children and babies 'into society,' which prevails among our labouring classes. The young ladies and gentlemen in this rank 'come out' metaphorically almost as soon as they come out literally; for a baby has no sooner been carried across the parental threshold than it finds its way into the public, the penny gaff, the theatre gallery. By the Apostle Paul! (whose notion of a good woman, by-the-by, was that she was a keeper at home)—by the Apostle Paul! but it is wonderful to see how soon a nursing mother will bring her last-born before the public, and initiate her gasping offspring into tavern life. Among the numerous babies by whom it was the luck of your Eye-witness to be surrounded on the occasion of his visit to the Friendly Lead, he detected every indication of a nascent and dawning tendency to conviviality. To get down upon the floor among the feet of the company, and grub in the sawdust of a spittoon; to sit upon the edge of a Windsor chair gnawing a pettitoe—vendors of this delicacy pervaded the apartment throughout the evening—or to produce a partial nose-eclipse by a secreting of the tip of that feature in the bowl of a tobacco-pipe; to pass an evening in any of these amusements is the proudest ambition of your Spital-fields baby, and one which the indulgent parent frequently allows it to gratify.

'Nothing,' said the mother of one of these precocious infants—which had a pettitoe in one hand and a long clay pipe in the other—'Nothing,' said the good woman, picking up the pettitoe for the seventh time, and restoring the glistening morsel, now profusely adorned with sawdust, to her offspring, 'will keep him good like giving him a 'bacco-pipe to play with. It will keep him quiet for hours.' A remark in the truth of which your Eye-witness was the more inclined to believe because it appeared to him that a free use of the instrument in question was likely to keep his young friend quiet, not only for hours, but altogether, inasmuch as the

chief object of this interesting child appeared to be the thrusting of the sharp end of his plaything into every one, by turns, of those orifices in the anatomy of the face and head which nature has beneficently intended as the apertures by which the things of the external world shall be brought to bear upon the brain.

By the time that your Eye-witness had made the above observations, and had gained from the treasurer and others the information which has here been condensed for the reader's benefit—by this time, the room had begun to fill to an almost inconvenient extent, and the more convivial aspects of the evening's entertainment to develop thomselves. The amusements were entirely of a musical, and mainly of a vocal nature. The chairman led the way, and producing a great order and silence by a free use of his hammer, proceeded to enliven the company with a performance which had the great charm of leaving a great deal to the imagination, inasmuch as both the words and tune were characterised by a certain vagueness, which made it possible for any gentleman or lady present to suppose that the ballad in course of delivery was his or her own especial favourite, it being as impossible to define what the song was *not*, as to come to any conclusion as to what it *was*. This effort (which was extremely popular) was followed by an amiable discussion between the 'chair' and a tall and obstinate person at the other end of the room, who rejoiced in the name of 'Arry, as to why he (the said 'Arry) should not be the next to promote the enjoyment of the evening with the vocal treasures at his own peculiar command. This controversy having ended in the defeat of the chair as far as logical argument was concerned, and another gentleman having consented to sing, in order to put an end to strife, it happened next that this last-named person had no sooner opened his mouth, than the unmanageable 'Arry, who was a sort of vice-chair, and was also provided with a hammer, availed himself of that instrument to put down the obliging gentleman, and himself began singing that very song with which he had just before been in vain en-

treated to 'oblige.' This obstinate gentleman was endowed by nature with an organ with which it was useless to attempt to contend, and bellowed away for about twenty minutes without stopping, much to the satisfaction of the audience. This done, our young friends, the boys, began to come forward, and some remarkable phenomena became developed. One of these young gentlemen was a touchy youth, and leaving off if anybody made a noise, was not to be persuaded to re-commence without much apologising and administration of soothing and pacificatory compliments by the chair. There was also an undecided personage who resembled an ill-wound musical-box, and who, getting on very tolerably through two or three verses, would then begin to run down, would wax fainter, and finally stop; and who, being wound up again by the comfort and applause of the public, went at it again, performed another verse or two, and again needing and receiving the same stimulus, went on thus, alternately flagging and rallying again to the end. The vocalist who kept guard over his mouth by holding the sealing-waxed end of his pipe before his lips, as if it was a musical instrument, throughout his performance, favoured the company at such length that your Eye-witness, leaving him at the end of his sixth verse, to go out and breathe a little fresh air, and returning after a brisk walk of half a mile or so, found him still at it, and with the pipe certainly, and the song apparently, exactly where he had left them.

There was indeed a great choice and variety of singers, who—every one with a different style and system of his own—were yet in one respect all alike and all labouring under a common difficulty—they none of them knew what to do with their eyes. It was in this as in many other matters that the wisdom of age became very apparent. The 'chair,' a gentleman somewhat advanced in years, had no sooner suspended the action of his hammer, with which he proclaimed that he was about to begin, than he closed his eyes firmly, to open them no more till his vocal exercise had ceased. It was wonderful that this obvious way of getting out of a great

difficulty did not seem to suggest itself to any of the younger members of the company. Every other optical resource was resorted to but—except in the case of the 'chair'—never this very simple one of doing away with the offending organ altogether. There was the faint vocalist, who looked down at his hands while he performed, and indeed there was ample food for reflection in a retrospective calculation as to the exact period of his youth when they had last been washed. There was the loud vocalist, who fixed an opposite friend during his song, till the friend—it was a very long performance—actually writhed under the steadiness of the singer's glare. Then there was the gentleman who looked at the wall just over the public head, a proceeding which caused him to wear a very dreadful and sinister aspect indeed, and which threw a chill upon all the company. Lastly, there were the two great classes, or divisions, of the vocalists who looked up and the vocalists who looked down. These last—except in the instances given above of the gentleman with the chronically defiled hands—would very commonly direct a searching gaze into the depths of a pint-pot, or engage to all appearance in an analytical examination of the calcined contents of an extinct tobacco-pipe. They were but a limited number in comparison with the up-looking portion of the company, for certainly out of six vocalists the ocular refuge of five was to be found in the stained and blackened ceiling of this temporary concert-room.

For some time after the commencement of the musical proceedings which have been above described a great degree of order was maintained. There was a long period during which not more than one gentleman sang at once; and even after this desirable state of things could be counted upon no longer, there was still half an hour or so of comparative discipline, when the president's hammer was so far respected that only two or three vocalists would be found enlivening the company with different songs at the same moment. Gradually however, with the increased numbers of the guests, a corresponding increase of singers was observable, and the

philanthropic desire of these gentlemen to contribute to the evening's entertainment became so irrepressible that the difficulty became at last to discover who was *not* singing. The members of the company, indeed, who were 'willing to oblige' seemed not only to derive no discouragement from a consideration of the fact that several other harmonists were already in full tongue, but they even appeared to find in this circumstance only an additional stimulus to greater exertion; and so one after another would add his voice to those previously in operation, and as each had a tune and words of his own the effect was very remarkable and striking indeed. Meantime the hammer of the chairman was not idle, but was busily and incessantly worked by its possessor as a restorative of order; nor was this instrument left wholly unsupported and alone. In various other parts of the room other and hitherto silent hammers sprung into view; and while the chair at one end of this hall of harmony and the vice at the other battered away at their respective tables, the treasurer suddenly shutting the room-door—probably to keep the sound in—began to hammer away at the panels in a workmanlike style, roaring the while to a distant friend to stand up and address the society on their disorderly conduct. The friend thus conjured responded to this appeal, and mounting on a bench, commenced a speech which was wholly inaudible; but which would doubtless, in spite of this circumstance, have attained to considerable length, had not the orator suddenly missed his footing and lost himself in an abyss of pint-pots and spittoons beneath the table. It was at this time that a band of three performers, which suddenly appeared in the room, struck up a lively air, while several babies, dispersed in different quarters of the apartment, lifted up their voices in bitter but justifiable complainings.

The climax was attained, it was nearly twelve o'clock, the house had to be cleared by midnight, and the treasurer (there being no more halfpence in prospect) rose upon a table to report progress, and dissolve the meeting in a brief speech. There was a pause while this oration was delivered, but

afterwards the din broke out again more furiously than before. — 'Ladies and gentlemen,' said the treasurer, and his speech is a model on which it would be well if some of our more diffuse orators would build their style —'beg to say—very much obliged—support—sum collected amounts to THREE POUNDS TWO SHILLINGS—thank you all round.'

This announcement, which was received with much applause, was the signal for the gradual breaking up of the assembly, but not for the cessation of either the songs, the bawlings, the baby screechings, or any of the other forms of noise by which the latter portion of the evening's amusement had been characterised. The company seemed, however, to be perfectly willing to move on, and as long as they were allowed to make the same amount of noise, to be quite contented to make it on the landing, on the staircase, in the tap, or in the street, as they were gradually urged from one of these fastnesses to another.

In the midst of all this jollification and riot, it was a curious thing to think of what it was that had brought it all about. Reminded constantly by the deep mourning-band upon the hat of the poor suicide's father of the real nature of this orgy, it was strange and painful to contrast this scene with the circumstances which had preceded and caused it. To think of the girl coming home from her work, appearing a little 'odd-like' to her friends, of her leaving the room and presently returning to announce that she HAD DONE IT; to think of the brief interval of incredulity, the season when no one—perhaps hardly the girl herself—could realise what had happened; to think of the symptoms that told the truth too plainly, of the flight to the hospital, of the eager medical questionings, the antidotes, the remedies, applied in vain; to think of the death, the inquest, the squalid funeral, but just over;—to think of these things and then to look round and note the frantic mirth of the company assembled to do honour to this Friendly Lead, and their apparent oblivion of its origin, was to compare and bring together two phases of

human existence, of which it would be hard to say which of the two was the ghastlier.

'In proportion as you descend in the social scale, the indifference to death seems to become more strongly developed,' was the remark made a few days since in the writer's hearing by one of the greatest of our medical authorities. It is entirely true. Perhaps it is that these successors of Lazarus leave so little behind them when they close their eyes at last—perhaps it is that they have had so much of hardness and suffering to encounter in their lives, that their brother's removal is looked on by them only in the light of a release—perhaps it is partly to these causes that this fact is attributable. At all events it is so in a marked and sometimes in a frightful degree. At the very last of these 'Leads' that had taken place in Bethnal-green, before this which was attended by your Eye-witness, the proceeds of the occasion were dedicated to the use of a woman who had lost her husband. The widow herself attended the festival, and your Eye-witness was informed, by one who saw the scene which he described, that this woman joined to such purpose in the conviviality of the meeting, that at last she jumped up upon a bench to sing a song, which came to an untimely end because she was too drunk to finish it. Certainly a 'Friendly Lead,' viewed in some of its aspects, is a grim and appalling solemnization—a riot over the suicide's grave; a revel in a charnel-house; a new episode in the Dance of Death.

And yet grotesque and terrible in the manner of its carrying out, a 'Lead' of this kind is in the main good in its intention and useful in its results. It is one more instance of the poor appealing to the poor, of the needy assisting the needy. The writer, sitting at his post of observation near the door of the room, felt something very nearly akin to shame, as he watched the rapid filling of the plate, as he noted the obvious poverty of those who dropped a portion of their small and hardly-earned wages into it, and as the staunchness with which these people stick by each other

forced itself more and more strongly on his attention. Not only did each person who entered the room place his contribution in the plate; not only did those who had taken the trouble to dispose of tickets among their friends arrive with the proceeds of their sale—but afterwards, and throughout the evening, more contributions would come in from the workmen and workwomen assembled in the room, and one among them—invariably a woman—would be sent by the others to put sixpence or a shilling in the plate. The woman would at such times be asked who the money came from, and would answer, 'she did not know—it had been given to her to bring—some of them had made it up among themselves she supposed.'

'Our web of life is of a mingled yarn—the good and ill together.' Your Eye-witness would have been very sorry to have missed this sight, which pained and gratified him at once. He met with none of that rudeness, incivility, and even danger, which some of his friends had persuaded him he would encounter in 'risking himself in a low neighbourhood,' and had only one complaint to make of those he went among, that they were too hospitable, the E. W. having swallowed a combination of proffered beverages which he is not quite sure that he has yet recovered from. In conclusion your Eye-witness thinks it only right to say, that he is sincerely grateful for the suggestion which directed his attention to the subject of Friendly Leads, and for the facilities which were afforded him, in the prosecution of his investigations, by the gentleman who was first instrumental in turning his steps toward the back regions of Bethnal-green.

XXIV.

HIS EVIDENCE AS TO THE POSTHUMOUS USES TO WHICH THE BODY OF A GREAT ARTIST MAY SOMETIMES BE PUT: WITH WHICH FINAL NOTICE THIS SERIES OF REPORTS IS BROUGHT TO A TERMINATION.

YOUR faithful Servant and Eye-witness has received a shock from the perusal of an advertisement which has recently appeared in our metropolitan newspapers, and in which he recognises (as he thinks) an allusion to an old and deeply-lamented favourite. The advertisement runs thus—

'To be SOLD for 20 guineas (real value 80*l.*) a superb real SEAL-SKIN CLOAK, suited for a lady of rank. It is new and elegant in shape, and a rare specimen of the Phoca Vitulina. To be seen at Amott Brothers, 61, St. Paul's Churchyard.'

It is by this time well known, to all who read these words, that the Talking Fish, the unhappy 'Jenny,' has ceased to exist. An account of this martyr's performances is to be found among these reports. The Eye-witness is not going to let the dear beast subside—as he suspects—into a cloak, without a word of comment. As he suspects—your Eye-witness repeats those words, and has he not reason to suspect? How strangely identical with the disappearance of our lost Jenny is this appearance in the market of a *new* and elegant seal-skin cloak! The dawn of this mantle on the commercial horizon is marvellously contemporaneous with the disappearance of the Talking Fish. The evidence, though circumstantial and presumptive only, is very strong. Here is a seal of great size and beauty living among us for a considerable time, pervading our metropolis, and touring in our provinces. Suddenly she disappears, and while we are in our first weeds for the dissolution of our favourite, we are startled, and our curiosity is piqued, by this account of a *Seal-skin* cloak, new and elegant in shape and a rare specimen of the Phoca Vitulina. Depend upon it the lady of rank, for whom we are told this mantle is suited, will go into the world with the Talking Fish clinging about her shoulders. Before,

however, the smooth fur of our lost Jenny is brought in contact with the smoother skin of the lady in question, it surely becomes the writer of these words to speak the panegyric of the Talking Fish, and to render her virtues and her fascinations as immortal as circumstances will admit of.

The Talking Fish has been spoken of above as a martyr, and indeed that rare specimen of the Phoca taciturna was a highly-principled and heroic fish. It was the opinion of the Eye-witness from the first that our lost Jenny was well aware of the nature of the exhibition in which she figured, and that she set her beautiful face against it from the beginning. She knew as well as possible that she was *not* a Talking Fish, and it was under a gradual conviction of her own dishonour, in appearing day after day under false pretences, that this truthful and virtuous animal gradually declined. Her last act, however, was the most heroic of her life. A capitalist who had amassed a sum of money of considerable magnitude, and who found his property to hang like a millstone about his neck—this gentleman of means is said to have offered 1,500*l.* for the Talking Fish but a few days before her death. Of this liberal personage we know nothing. It may have been his noble intention to send this rare specimen of the Phoca Vitulina back to her native shores—it may have been his whimsical thought to accompany her even, and to watch her first gambols of delight when she found herself among the other Phocæ Vitulinæ upon the shores of Africa, for ever emancipated from the Piccadilly tank. Such *may* have been the course meditated by our capitalist; but then, on the other hand, he may also have contemplated some new deception in connexion with this injured fish. He may have intended announcing her as a Reading Badger, a Card-playing Eagle, or a Piano-forte-tuning Adder, any of which appellations would have fitted her to the full as well as that under which this taciturn animal was ordinarily announced. That the conviction on the mind of our lost Jenny was to the effect that the intentions of the capitalist were of this commercial nature is obvious from her conduct. She had no sooner

heard of his offer than she turned over on her back in the tank, cast one last wistful look around, and closed her soft eyes to open them no more.

And thou didst well, dear Jenny, and thy release is cause for such jubilation as was bestowed upon the dead by that ancient nation, who wept when a man was born, but laughed and sang and leapt with joy when one had died. Even so does he who writes these words, skip (in spirit) round thine empty tank, and execute midnight dances of delight about the warehouse of the Messieurs Amott in St. Paul's Churchyard, where (he suspects) thy suffering skin is waiting to adorn the spotless shoulders of the 'lady of rank.' May she (the lady of rank) appear forthwith, and may that skin, emancipated at last from the clutch of the proprietor, soon pass into hands that will guard it, and keep it entire. For a dread horror is upon the mind of the Eye-witness, that if this lady of rank does not turn up soon, the skin of our lost Jenny will be sold piecemeal, and we shall see some morning, that some City firm has received a consignment of five hundred million seal-skin tobacco-pouches—suited for *gentlemen* of rank, and every one a rare specimen of the Phoca Vitulina.

Approach then, oh lady of rank! the warehouses of the Brothers Amott, and rescue the remains of the lost Jenny from so humiliating a lot as that last contemplated. Enfold and wrap this warm and comfortable fur about thee, gather it around thee in shuddering corridors, as in the shrewd March nights thou emergest from the playhouse into the icy street. Bivouac beneath it when on thy wedding tour thou dost cross Britannia's Channel; and when thy noble mate deserts thee, as he surely will, and retires to indulge alone that malady of the sea, from which the peer is no more exempt than the peasant, take then the Phoca Vitulina to thy gentle and aching heart, and thou shalt do well. Nay, never carry this cordial garment with thee throughout thy tour. Let it be a railway rug to thee in the daytime, and a quilt of comfort in the night, and thou shalt still rejoice more and more in thy

purchase. And if thou attainest to old age, oh lady of rank!—a thing as likely to happen to thee, as to the charwoman who is at this moment scraping the stones outside the Eye-witness's door, and the nerves inside the Eye-witness's spine, with hearthstone—if this fate awaits thee, oh then thou wilt take this old cloak about thee, more gladly than ever—thou wilt tell thy grandchildren—there is no offence—the sad story of the Talking Fish, and thou wilt go down to thy ancestral vault, with the Phoca Vitulina for a bosom friend, and the gratitude of the Eye-witness for an Epitaph

And now—now that our Eye-witnessing has reached, so to say, beyond the limits of the tomb, what remains but for him who has ventured to take upon him this office, and has sought to serve the public in this important capacity—what remains for him, but to lay aside his function and descend—reluctantly—from that imaginary pulpit or witness-box from which he has given his evidence, casting, as he does so, an anxious glance around to see the effect of the witness that he has borne, upon that Jury which is never finally wrong—THE PUBLIC?

THE END.

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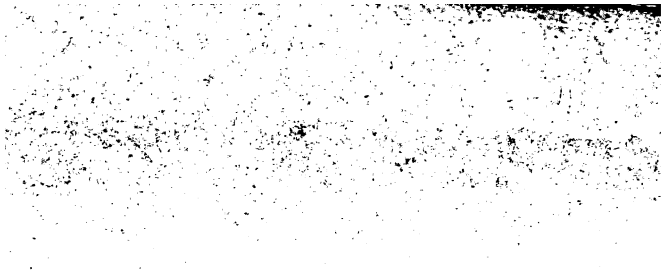

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